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ABSTRACT

A number of issues of central importance to understanding the nature of language, its acquisition and use were considered at a seminar on language learning. Papers delivered at the seminar are as follows: "Why Don't Learners Learn What Teachers Teach? The Interaction Hypothesis" (Dick Allwright); "The Role of Instruction in Second Language Acquisition" (Rod Ellis); "The Development of the Verb Phrase in a Bilingual Child" (Annick de Houwer); "What Has the Learner Learned? Proficiency Testing in a Communicative Perspective" (Allan Emmett); "Learning Languages Through Various Media" (Sabine Jones); "Bilingualism and Lexical Innovation" (Appie Kennedy-Jonker); "Learning German Without a Teacher: A Self-Instructional Programme for Undergraduate Students of Engineering Science" (David Little, Aedamar Grant); "Motivation and Perseverance in Foreign Language Learning" (Lubasa N'ti Nseendi); "Foreigner Register" (Rose Maclaran, David Singleton); "Bridging the Formal and Informal Fields of Irish Language Learning at Primary Level" (Sinead Norton); "Interaction Between Learner and Learning Environment: Issues in the Development of Learning Materials for Adult Learners of Irish" (Helen O Murchu); "The Acquisition of Relative Clauses in a Formal and in an Informal Setting: Further Evidence in Support of the Markedness Hypothesis" (Maria Pavesi); "Patterns of Reading in L1 and L2" (Nancy Sanguineti de Serrano); "Stimulating Interaction in the Foreign Language Classroom Through Conversation in Small Groups of Learners" (Anna Trosborg); and "Stop the Monitor I Want To Get Off: or Looking for a Way Forward in Language Teaching" (Carol Wallace, Jane Macaskie). (MSE)

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Language learning in formal and informal contexts

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Proceedings of a joint seminar of the Irish and British Associations for Applied Linguistics held at Trinity College, Dublin, 11-13 September 1984

Edited by

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With a foreword by

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FOREWORD

There are several distinct traditions in contemporary applied linguistics, reflecting varying degrees of closeness to theoretical linguistics, to interdisciplinary problem-solving, and to social commitment. These traditions meet at large-scale congresses, but such gatherings tend to be impersonal and public. The real business of discussion, adjustment of ideas, and exploration of alternative approaches, responds well to smaller gatherings which are not too in-bred.

Consequently the British Association for Applied Linguistics welcomed the opportunity provided by the Irish Association for a joint seminar in Dublin in September 1984. The topic, "The Formal and Informal Contexts of Language Learning", enabled us to consider a number of issues of central importance to our understanding of the nature of language, its acquisition and use. It also enabled us to explore some of the many problems involved in encouraging language acquisition, whether as teachers, parents, examiners or administrators.

Papers included in this selection reflect all these concerns. They vary in approach from the empirical and experimental, to the philosophical, to the descriptive. Some of the problems addressed are research questions concerned with language acquisition and use, while some are crucial practical questions for which immediate answers must be supplied unavoidably, however uncertain our current theoretical understanding. Languages relatively neglected in applied linguistic literature (Dutch, Danish and Italian, as well as Irish) form the basis of many papers. All in all, this is a fascinating collection which well reflects what we hope will be the first of many meetings of our applied linguistic associations across national boundaries.

Christopher Brumfit
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I : KEYNOTE PAPERS

Dick Allwright
University of Lancaster

WHY DON'T LEARNERS LEARN WHAT TEACHERS TEACH? - THE INTERACTION HYPOTHESIS.

Four years ago in Albuquerque, New Mexico I started asking learners about their language lessons. The most striking thing to emerge from the very first time I tried it was that, after one lesson, about half the class was unable to tell me,'correctly', what the lesson had been about. That is, they failed to identify the teacher's main teaching point, and this in spite of the fact that the teacher's teaching point had come from the textbook each learner had in front of him or her, which clearly labelled the point in question. Such a result would be relatively easy to understand if the learners concerned had been totally unable to remember the lesson, and had therefore simply failed to answer the question, but in fact they had alternative ideas about what the lesson had been about. Assuming good faith on the part of these students we could only conclude that, in some important sense, the lesson had in fact been about different things for different learners. The obvious question was: "Where might such differing perceptions come from, and how might they be related to what learners actually learn from a language lesson?"

For the last four years I have been looking for ways of researching that question, and what I wish to present here is the conceptualisation of language teaching and language learning that has been developed, the research programme it has led to, and the preliminary results of that research. These will be 'very' preliminary, since we are still developing the necessary research instruments, but they will I hope suffice to indicate why we feel encouraged enough to pursue this particular line of enquiry. ('We', I should add, is a reference to research students working with me at Lancaster as the Curriculum and Classroom Research Group.)

Before embarking on the Lancaster work it might be helpful if I sketch first some more of the background to the research question, and to the title of this paper. Briefly, work in second language acquisition has, in the last few years, drawnnearer and nearer to classroom research. A key paper marking this important development is Long's "Does Instruction Make a Difference?" (1983), which reviews attempts to answer the question in the title and concludes, perhaps optimistically, that there is enough evidence to justify the claim that instruction can be beneficial. It may seem extraordinary that such a review was felt to be necessary, but work on second language

acquisition has been suggesting (particularly in Krashen's publications (1981, 1982)) that instruction as commonly conceived and practised is of little or no help to the language learner. This suggestion has been boosted by the evidence coming in that the so-called 'natural order' for language acquisition was to a large extent unaffected by instruction (see Allwright, 1984a for a survey). Over the same time period (the last four or so years) Lightbown has reported research that casts further doubt on the directness of the relationship between language learning and the teaching learners get (see Lightbown, 1983), and Pica (1983) has suggested, from her research, that if there is an effect for instruction then it seems likely to have more to do with the processes of acquisition (involving patterns of error-making, for example) than with the course of linguistic development. If further research still confirms such findings, then it will look as if our carefully worked-out syllabuses are relatively powerless over learners' own ways (natural or not) of getting something from language lessons.

Recent work on second language acquisition, then, supports the presupposition of my title that learners do not in fact learn what teachers teach, and reinforces our interest in the research questions that follow from it. There is, it seems, a real problem in the relationship between language learning and language teaching, and not just one in the minds of a small group of students in New Mexico. If we look at the relationship in more detail we can see that the following three aspects are problematic:

A. Why learners do not learn everything they are taught.
B. How learners manage to learn things they are not taught.
C. How learners manage to learn things they are taught.

'A' is relatively uninteresting, since we would not expect any aspect of education or training to be one-hundred percent efficient, and previous classroom research has shown repeatedly that language teaching is an extremely complex activity, and not one that we could expect would be done very effectively very often (see Allwright 1975 for an early study of the complexities of the treatment of error in oral work, for example). 'B' and 'C' are much more interesting. 'B' raises the issue of the necessity, or otherwise, of actual teaching, as commonly understood, and 'C' raises the issue of the extent to which the teaching can facilitate the learning process, as opposed to hindering it (since classroom research has also suggested that the potential for confusion in the language classroom is likely to be very high - see McTear for an early study on this issue, 1975). Several hypotheses can be suggested to account for the picture we now have of the

teaching/learning relationship, and these will be briefly considered before I focus in on the Interaction Hypothesis that is my main concern in this paper, but first it is necessary to introduce the overall conceptualisation that lies behind everything else.

An alternative way of looking at language teaching and language learning.

The words we have in English to talk about teaching and learning reinforce in an unfortunate way the perception that they are two different things necessarily done by two different people or groups of people. In order to understand the complexities of the relationship between teaching and learning we need to reorient our thinking and see what happens in classrooms from a different point of view. As I have stated elsewhere (Allwright, 1984) I believe it helps if we look at language lessons as co-produced events in which all the participants are simultaneously involved in the management of interaction and, ipso facto, in the management of their learning. Following this line of thought we can look upon language lessons as sets of learning opportunities, some deliberate but many incidental, all created through the necessary processes of classroom interaction. It should now be easier to see why the relationship between teaching and learning is problematic. What the learners do learn is presumably limited by the learning opportunities that are made available to them. But the provision of learning opportunities is not just determined by the teaching. The teaching is just one factor (though sometimes a powerful one) in the overall process by which lessons happen and learning opportunities are created. What we need now to account for is the process by which learning opportunities are created and the process by which different learners take different things from the sum total of learning opportunities that each lesson offers.

This conceptualisation will need to be elaborated later, but this introductory sketch should suffice to set the scene for the consideration of the various hypotheses we can propose to account for the curious phenomena of classroom language learning.

Some possible hypotheses.

1. The INCUBATION hypothesis.

It has been suggested (Lightbown et al, 1980) that whatever learners are taught (or otherwise meet in the course of classroom interaction) will need an 'incubation' period before it can be expected to appear in their performance. Such an incubation period is crucial to Prabhu's concept of 'communicational' language teaching, in which it is held that any raising of language learning to consciousness will interfere with non-conscious incubation-period acquisition processes (Prabhu, 1980). As a hypothesis it could

account for findings that otherwise appear to point to a total lack of causal relationship between teaching and learning (or exposure and learning), because it would predict that recently encountered items would, in performance, appear not have been learned, and it would also predict that items would appear to have been just learned even though they had not recently been encountered. The incubation hypothesis, however, would not account for the appearance in performance of items not actually encountered. But such a phenomenon is the product of the view of teaching and learning that assumes that all that the learners encounter is the syllabus. There is no problem if we accept the alternative conception presented in the previous section, whereby what the learners encounter is much more than and different from the syllabus.

Although the incubation hypothesis offers a plausible account for why things encountered should not immediately appear in performance, it is true to say that evidence for the hypothesis is so far weak. Certainly the results of Prabhu's project confirm that acquisition in a classroom context is possible without raising language items to consciousness, but Lightbown's subsequent work on her particular project has not (1984, personal communication) confirmed earlier hopes. She had noted (1980) that forms appeared in performance soon after they had been explicitly taught, then disappeared as the teaching focus changed. What she had hypothesized was that they would reappear, at some unspecifiable future time, but it now seems that they mostly disappear for good.

2. The INPUT hypothesis.

Krashen's work on second language acquisition has suggested (1981, 1982) that what might account for any oddities in the relationship between teaching and learning is the possibility that what matters for acquisition is not what gets taught but what gets encountered, in circumstances that render it comprehensible. This is fully consistent with the conceptualisation of language lessons as sets of learning opportunities, but Krashen's position is somewhat special because it allows no privileged status for items that are explicitly taught rather than merely encountered in circumstances that render them comprehensible (though this 'comprehensibility condition' is itself extremely important, as we shall continue to see). On the contrary, Krashen's work suggests that drawing explicit attention to language items is a way of making acquisition more, rather than less, difficult. Krashen's version of the input hypothesis would predict that the 'merely encountered' items would have privileged status. This would appear to be in conflict with Long's overall finding reported above, that by and large instruction does seem to be preferable to exposure.

Krashen's version of the input hypothesis, then,

would appear to be unnecessarily strong, and to pose a challenge to those who hold that conscious learning from explicit teaching can be beneficial. It would be easier to maintain a less strong hypothesis concerning input, and to suggest that we should include in our conception of input both taught items and items merely encountered. Later we shall see that it may also help if we broaden the notion of input even more, to include information about the language being learned, for example, and not just 'items' or bits of it.

3. The NATURAL PROCESS hypothesis.

Another way of accounting for differences between what gets taught and what gets learned is to appeal to a 'natural processes' hypothesis. Krashen suggests that instruction typically frustrates learners' natural processes (which he terms 'acquisition' - as opposed to the artificial processes of 'learning'). If we interpret this in terms of language teaching method then we can hypothesize that it is not the mere fact that an item is drawn to the learners' attention that 'spoils' it for them (which is the implication so far from the input hypothesis as conceived by Krashen) but the fact that the method of instruction the teacher uses to present the item and have the learners practise it itself frustrates the learners natural processes. We should then see learners profiting more from the merely encountered items, since at least in such circumstances they can use whatever processes best suit them. Again the hypothesis seems too strong, since it would suggest that centuries of language teaching experience have taught teachers nothing about how to help learners, and only provided them with an armoury of ways of frustrating their natural inclinations. It thus poses a challenge to the language teaching profession, as does Krashen's version of the input hypothesis, as noted above.

4. The NATURAL ORDER hypothesis.

One particularly attractive way of accounting for the teaching/learning differences is to suggest, as has Krashen, again, that even classroom language development is subject to a natural order that instruction cannot significantly disturb. It may even be that the frequency with which items are encountered, whether taught or not, is largely irrelevant to the emergence of this natural order. It is an attractive hypothesis because it would relate second language acquisition theory neatly to first language work, and suggest a very powerful process at work, one of considerable interest to cognitive psychology in general. What is perhaps surprising is that this hypothesis is quite well supported by the available research studies. Although there are many conceptual and methodological problems associated with the natural order studies there does appear to be a real phenomenon to explain under it all (see Long and Sato, 1984, for a critical survey of

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the relevant research studies). Thus there do appear to be natural processes at work that determine the sequence of development, at least in some areas of language, even for learners under instruction that does not respect this natural sequence. So far there is relatively little evidence for a natural order for very much of language, but work has gone beyond the 'notorious' few morphemes, to include some linguistic subsystems (see Pienemann, 1984), and there is certainly enough evidence to keep the natural order hypothesis very much alive, and very much a challenge to language teachers.

5. The PERSONAL AGENDA hypothesis.

Some years ago John Schumann suggested (see Schumann and Schumann, 1977) that his own classroom language learning was influenced by what he called his 'personal agenda'. He was referring both to his personal view of what he wanted to learn at any one time, and to how he wanted to set about the business of learning it. His was clearly a conscious approach to classroom language learning, and it suggests the hypothesis that at least part of any mismatch between what teachers teach and what learners learn could be due to the learners' ability to selectively take from a lesson only those things that they want, and only in the manner that they want to do it in. This seems to be a view that is very much in line with commonsense, although it is not one that I can find support for in the general professional literature on language teaching and learning, which seems to assume a much more passive role for learners, vis-a-vis both content and method. It is a hypothesis that would satisfactorily account, in a wholly positive way, for learners learning less than is taught them (since at any one time presumably not everything that gets taught could possibly be on everybody's personal agenda), and in combination with the assumption made earlier that the teaching does not fully determine what learning opportunities become available, it would also account for learners taking from lessons things that have not been 'taught' at all.

The importance of interaction.

This brief review of five relatively plausible hypotheses has been informed by the conceptualisation of language teaching and learning presented earlier. This conceptualisation itself rests on the contention that language lessons are best seen as instances of collective interaction. It is time to look in more detail at this contention, to see how it relates to the five hypotheses, and how it suggests two more.

To suggest a hypothesis entails a claim that it could account for something of interest. To suggest two interaction hypotheses therefore entails making two

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claims. The first such claim I wish to make is relatively uninteresting because it seems to be so obviously true. The claim is simply that the processes of classroom interaction determine what learning opportunities become available to be learned from. Even a casual inspection of classroom research data attests to the truth of this particular claim, since there seems no doubt that the moment a teacher asks a learner to do something the teacher is at the mercy of that learner in an important sense (although 'at the mercy of' may sound unduly melodramatic). If the learner makes any sort of mistake the teacher may feel obliged to do something about it. Whatever is done about it constitutes a new learning opportunity for anyone else present. And if nothing is done about it then it will constitute a misleading learning opportunity. Certainly some learners' mistakes will have been foreseen, and could therefore be interpreted as planned, in a way, but there is always the possibility of unforeseen errors, and always the possibility, therefore, of unforeseen and unplanned learning opportunities, created by the normal processes of classroom interaction. I would argue, then, that this first claim is almost trivially true, to the extent that it should not need to be discussed further, not as a 'claim', at least. 'Trivially true' is not the same as 'trivial', however, and I would want to argue that the implications of the truth of this first claim are far from trivial. Before discussing the implications of this first 'weak' interaction hypothesis, it may be as well to introduce the second, 'stronger', one.

The second claim I wish to make, leading to my second interaction hypothesis, is that perhaps the process of classroom interaction <u>is</u> the learning process (or acquisition process, if that term is preferred). It may be that interaction is what somehow <u>produces</u> linguistic development. This is a much more 'interesting' claim, in a way, because it suggests a process to account for language development, rather than merely a process to account for the <u>opportunity</u> for language development. This claim is essentially identical to that made in what may be called the 'strong' form of the 'communicative' approach to language teaching (see Breen and Candlin, 1980). Following this claim the importance of interaction is not simply that it creates learning opportunites, it is that it constitutes learning itself. It is intriguing that the three hypotheses related mainly to Krashen's work (numbers 2, 3, and 4 of the five described above) say nothing about the 'mechanism' of linguistic development. The input hypothesis refers only to opportunity, and the natural process and natural order hypotheses do not deal with <u>how</u> input is converted into spontaneous performance. The '<u>strong</u>' interaction hypothesis claims that we need look no further than the process of interaction itself. The connection

with Krashen's thinking is straightforward: Krashen regards the obtaining of input as crucial, but adds the condition, as we have seen, that input, to be of use, must also be comprehensible. This strong form of the interaction hypothesis suggests that it may be the interactive process of making input comprehensible that benefits the learner. This entails that learners will learn best that which was not comprehensible until they had done some interactive work to make it so. It is a highly active view of the learners' role, and one that puts the emphasis less on interaction in general than on those specific episodes of interaction that focus on the negotiation of meaning. (It may be claimed, of course, that all interaction involves the negotiation of meaning, by definition, and so it is necessary here to add the notion of 'focus' unless one wishes to suggest that all forms of interaction are equally valuable to the language learner.)

Putting the hypotheses to the test.

So we now have two forms of an interaction hypothesis, involving two distinct claims. The first is that interaction determines what becomes available to be learned, and the second is that interaction is the process whereby whatever is learned is learned. These now need to be built into a research programme that focusses on them but does not lose sight of the existence of all the other hypotheses that might help us account for the phenomena of classroom language development.

It may help to return to the question posed in the opening paragraph of this paper - How is it that learners emerge from a lesson with differing perceptions of what the lesson was about, and how do such perceptions relate to what they actually learn from the lesson? We can now see that the differing perceptions may arise because of the interactive work the learners have done. Firstly we can expect learners' perceptions to differ from the teacher's if the teacher sees the lesson in terms of the items explicitly taught as part of the lesson plan, while the learners see it in terms of the total set of learning opportunities that actually arose in the course of the classroom interaction. We can then expect each learner's perceptions to be different from those of each of the other learners, on the grounds that what will be most memorable to each learner will be those items s/he has personally done interactive work for. We could further expect there to be a relationship with what learners get out of a lesson, along the same lines that learners would presumably learn best those items that they have personally worked for. At the same time we should bear in mind that this last expectation is no less interesting if it is not found to hold, since, from a pedagogic point of view as well as from a theoretical one, it would be extremely interesting to find that learning can be a 'spectator

sport' - that personal involvement in the interaction is less important than the opportunity to witness the making comprehensible of input, whoever does the actual interactive work. (Seliger's work on 'high' and 'low' input generators is clearly relevant here, and it is important to note that this work is by no means conclusive in its contention that active involvement is the key - see Seliger (1977).)

We could pursue this line of thought into a research programme by studying classroom interaction and individual learners' different contributions to it, and then looking for evidence in learner performance of some sensible relationship between classroom interaction and what I would now like to call 'uptake'. The logistical and methodological problems involved seem to render such a research programme impractical, however. It seems unlikely, in practice, that we could identify in classroom interaction those things that we would expect learners to have learned (different things for different learners, presumably) and turn these into some sort of performance test before the next lesson comes along to add yet more items. In any case we might well prefer elicitation to standard test procedures, and yet it would be even less likely the elicitation measures would offer the performance evidence we would need to relate learning to particular episodes of classroom interaction. We might be able to see relationships over time, but time would introduce many other variables to obscure the picture, and would certainly introduce major logistical problems in the handling of the quantities of data that would be generated.

We need an alternative research strategy, to even begin exploring the validity and usefulness of the hypotheses proposed to account for what we can most economically call 'differential uptake'. The strategy that we have developed at Lancaster stands the above line of thinking on its head and begins with the identification of 'uptake', in the hope that this will enable us to pinpoint precisely what we are looking for in the classroom interaction that preceded it.

The first problem, then, is now that of finding ways of identifying 'uptake' - whatever it is that learners get from language lessons. Test data must obviously be considered again, but how would we decide what to test? If we cannot take the time to fully analyze a lesson before we have to test the learners then there will be no clear basis for selecting test content. If we adopt standard tests these are more likely to reflect the sorts of things deliberate teaching points are made, rather than the oddities individual learners might pick up from a lesson, and if we are looking for differential uptake then we must obviously find a way that allows individuality to express itself. Test data might be useful at a later stage, if

it will help us to establish the extent of a learner's command of particular items of learning that have been identified in some other way.

We might try obtaining our basic data by standard second language acquisition elicitation techniques, but if we use 'controlled elicitation' procedures these again presuppose that we know what we are looking for, and if we use 'free elicitation' procedures we end up with a mass of data and no particular reason for selecting any part or parts of it for investigation. Again, elicited data might be useful as a sort of performance test for items otherwise identified, but what we really need is a way of identifying items of uptake in the first place.

The 'solution' we have decided to try is ridiculously simple in conception. This paper started with reference to asking learners to tell us about their lessons. Why not pursue the same technique to identify uptake? Why not just ask learners what they think they have got out of being in a particular classroom at a particular time? As a starting point it has obvious problems, but it also has some distinct advantages. The most obvious problem is that it lets the whole research enterprise rest on what learners can be bothered to tell us. This involves two issues - sincerity, and accuracy. Clearly our data will be useless if, when we ask them, we cannot trust the learners' replies even to be sincere, their honest attempt to identify what they think they have learned. Since there are no procedures that can guarantee sincerity this must remain a problem in the relationship between researchers and learners. It might also be argued that our data will in any case be useless because there is no way that learners can be expected to simply know what they have learned from any particular lesson. At first sight this may seem to be a much more damaging problem, but in fact I believe it constitutes a limitation rather than a vitiation of the research project. The objection assumes that only what learners 'really' know is of any interest, whereas I would like to argue that, as a first step, there is every reason to be interested in what learners think they know. Such perceptions on the part of learners, if sincerely held, are surely quite likely to be of practical significance to the learners, to actually guide their learning behaviour. The accuracy of such perceptions is a separate issue, not the whole issue. The advantages of 'self-report' data in this area are twofold. Firstly, if we ask learners to tell us what they have learned we are likely to obtain a manageable list of items to guide our next step of looking in the classroom interaction data for the interactive evidence. Secondly, via self-reports we can hope straightforwardly to probe items of uptake that relate learners' idiosyncratic learning behaviour to the whole spectrum of learning opp-

ortunities, and not just to those things the teacher explicitly taught.

What we are developing is ways of asking learners to tell us what they think they have learned from any particular lesson. So far we have used a three-stage procedure which starts with an open chart that the learners are asked to fill in at the end of a lesson, by writing down all the points that arose during the lesson. If necessary we can explain that we are interested in all the points they can remember, and certainly not just those the teacher built the lesson around. We then give the learners an hour or so to do something else (have another lesson, of a different sort, or have lunch, and so on) and then we ask them to return to their original chart and identify for us those items they believe they actually learned (or learned more about) during the lesson. The third stage is to follow this up with an interview which will give us a chance to probe further, jog the memory further, and even probe learners' opinions about why they feel able to make the claims they have about what they have got from the lesson. We are well aware, of course, that such a process should constitute a quite strong form of consciousness-raising among learners, and that this might be seen as a danger to the cleanness of the research project. This would certainly be a problem if we were dealing with a classical experimental design, but that is not the case here. What we have here is a preliminary sort of investigation to establish ways of gathering relevant data. If those ways make a difference to the learners concerned then this is in itself something to study, and not at all something to regret. It means that the project becomes a matter of 'action research' in this respect, in which the raising of consciousness can be seen as a potentially valuable contribution to the learners' overall experience. Ultimately, after all, we are concerned with helping learners get more out of language classes, not just with describing how it is that they typically get so little.

Once we have identified a number of items that the learners claim to have learned our next problem is to look for the relevant interactive evidence in the classroom data. For this we obviously need a good record of the lesson in question, at least a good audiotape, preferably a good videorecording. (So far we have avoided videotaping on the grounds that it would add unwarrantably to the complexity of our procedures, while they are still at relatively early stages of development, but there is no doubt that good videorecordings, if they could be obtained with as little fuss as can audiorecordings, would make data interpretation very much simpler.) We then need a transcription of the lesson, so that we can begin locating in the data the episodes that might help us to account for what the learners claim to have learned. Essentially we are trying to locate the relevant learning opportunit-

ies. To clarify what this involves it may help to give an illustration. If, for example, one learner, but no others, claims to have learned a particular word, say 'hypothetical', then we look through the transcript for the occurrences of that word, and then inspect those occurrences for possible clues as to why that particular learner should have identified that particular word as one he or she had learned.

This search for possible clues is not an unmotivated one. It is informed by the overall conceptualisation presented earlier, and which we must now elaborate a little further. The main point is that we are now characterizing language lessons not as sequences of teaching points but as indeterminate numbers of learning opportunities. These learning opportunities themselves can be further characterized, but it may help to step back for a moment first. The overall conceptualisation (as introduced in Allwright 1984) assumes that it makes sense to think of teachers, and learners, as going to language lessons with more or less well determined plans or intentions. For the teacher these are likely to be committed to paper in advance, in a lesson plan, while for the learners they are likely to remain rather vague, but in either case we can expect the plans to relate to three topics - what is to be learned, or the syllabus, from the teacher's point of view; how it is to be learned, or the method; and the atmosphere or classroom climate within which teacher and learners are to work together. Quite apart from any specific plans, we can also assume that all participants take into the classroom with them their individuality, which for the learners might be described in terms of personality characteristics, intelligence, motivation, and so on. Each of the participants then has to deal with all of the others, with all their individuality and all their idiosyncratic intentions, in the classroom interaction that constitutes the language lesson. The three original elements of participants' plans - syllabus, method, and classroom climate -go into the crucible that is this classroom interaction and are transformed so that it is no longer appropriate to talk about the outcomes using the same terms. These 'outcomes' are the learning opportunities generated by the classroom interaction. Two main sorts of opportunities can be distinguished. Firstly there are what we might call opportunities to 'encounter' target language (or any other) phenonema. Secondly there are opportunities to practise doing whatever it is one is trying to learn. These two correspond conceptually to 'syllabus' and 'method', of course, but in practice may differ considerably. The third outcome, corresponding conceptually to the plans for 'classroom climate', is the state of receptivity that can perhaps be associated with the learning opportunities, such that some learning opportunities are more likely to facilitate uptake than others. In our research thinking so far we have concentrated on 'encounter' opportunities, and on the factors

that might be involved in 'receptivity' to them. Using the term 'input' to refer to encounter opportunities, we have broadened the use of the term 'input' to cover far more than it does for second language acquisition researchers generally. For second language acquisition specialists it normally refers only to examples of the target language, which we are calling 'samples'. For us the term also covers any information about the target (language, culture, etc), whether or not such information is presented in the target language. We call this information 'guidance', and distinguish three forms for it - explanations or descriptions of target phenomena, hints or clues about criterial features of such phenomena, and simple feedback about any attempts to display mastery of the target, or mastery of information concerning it.

Using this framework we can now begin to characterize the learning opportunities we have identified as relevant to the items learners claim to have learned. In this way we can hope to build up a picture of preferred types of input (in our terms). Another way of looking at it is to talk in terms of what might motivate learners' selective attention to different types of input, which brings us very close to the issue of receptivity again. It also brings us back to the notion of the 'active' learner, a key feature of the strong form of the interaction hypothesis (notice that so far we have appealed, albeit implicitly, only to what is suggested by the weak form of the hypothesis). And so we can also look at learning opportunities in terms of the factors we might expect to be relevant to selective attention, using the strong form of the interaction hypothesis as our starting point. From this point of view we can predict that learning opportunities will be most likely to be taken up if they directly involve the learner concerned in interactive work, preferably with a clear focus on the negotiation of meaning. We might also expect, bringing in the Personal Agenda hypothesis, that selective attention will be paid to those items that coincide with personal agenda items, and, further, that learners may even initiate work on personal agenda items, thus rendering them even more likely to generate learning opportunities that are taken up, but only, perhaps, by those learners who have initiated them. From general pedagogic thinking we can add the expectation that most learners are more likely to pay attention to items that are explicitly brought to their attention, and preferably by a trusted teacher rather than by a less trusted fellow-learner. But we might also expect that some learners at least will recognize that some if not all of their fellow-learners are worth paying attention to.

We now have a very rich supply of factors to investigate, and it is somewhat surprising to realize that they are all amenable to operational definition within our research framework. They are observable aspects of class-

room interaction, and aspects that can be further probed without too much difficulty via learner questionnaires and follow-up interviews. In fact we have now devised and piloted a questionnaire to establish learners' beliefs about the relative usefulness of learning opportunities that exhibit different combinations of the factors we have hypothesized to be important. There seems little doubt that learners are able to discriminate on the basis of these factors, and find it meaningful to do so. This opens up the possibility of relating differential uptake not only to the differences between learning opportunities but also to the differences between learners' perceptions of the relative value of different learning opportunity types. This of course is a way into the area of learner strategies, with fairly obvious implications for language pedagogy in general and learner training in particular.

The results so far.

It really is far too early to talk of results and yet the development work has already produced data that carry intriguing pointers. For example, the personal agenda hypothesis is clearly useful in accounting for some instances of differential uptake, but one has to distinguish between items brought up by a particular learner for his or her own benefit, and items introduced as an act of altruism - where a learner initiates discussion of a colloquial expression, perhaps, but does it so that others shall have a chance of learning from the event. Personal initiation by itself is clearly not enough to predict uptake. So far the best predictor of uptake (which we must remember is operationally defined as that which is claimed to have been learned) is, boringly enough, that an item should have been explicitly taught, by the teacher. But the next best predictor is that the learner who claims to have learned an item was personally involved in interactive work on the item in question. We have not yet been able to sort out whether interactive work for comprehensibility is more predictive than interactive work in general, but we do have some data that would throw light on the issue, if only we could find the time to complete the analysis of it. It is also quite clearly the case that some items are claimed to have been learned when no teaching focus has been involved, nor personal interactive work, not even interactive work by any participant, and where the learner does not appear to have had the item on some personal agenda at all. Mysteries remain, therefore, but some at least appear likely to be going to allow themselves to be unravelled.

So what?

The incubation hypothesis, unmentioned in the last sections, is capable of threatening the entire edifice so far built up. If it is true, as seems entirely reasonable, that learning is a very gradual process that often goes

'underground', then what right have we to expect to get anything worthwhile out of a project that looks for relationships between particular lessons and particular items of linguistic development (as if development could in any case be 'itemized')? Our response could be that we are knowingly 'looking for the lost money where the light happens to be brightest', but whereas in the story the drunk knew he had not lost it there, in our case we do not yet know how much of the money lies in the light and how much will have to be looked for in murkier places. What is particularly encouraging for us is that the project overall seems conceptually coherent, capable of being pursued with reasonably straightforward and trustworthy research techniques, and promises to throw light on a number of questions of growing interest - to second language acquisition researchers, to applied linguists, and to language teachers.

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THE ROLE OF INSTRUCTION IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Introduction

The teaching of a second/foreign language has traditionally taken place on the assumption that instruction can beneficially affect the process of classroom second language acquisition (SLA). The question, therefore, that motivated early research was not whether instruction had a role to play, nor what this role was, but what kind of instruction had the strongest effect. This was the issue that the comparative methodological studies of the sixties and seventies sought to investigate (e.g. Scherer and Wertheimer 1964, Smith 1970). These studies, however, were unable to emphatically establish the claims of any one method over its rivals. In most cases it did not seem to matter whether students were subjected to one method or another (1).

The late sixties and seventies also saw the beginnings of the empirical study of naturalistic SLA. Studies by Ravem (1968), Dulay and Burt (1973, 1974) and Cazden et al. (1975) among others indicated that SLA could successfully take place with learners receiving little or no instruction at all. Indeed in some instances (e.g. Schumann 1978) it appeared that even when instruction was provided nothing was gained by it. SLA, it was argued, proceeded as a process of creative construction with the learner slowly building his interlanguage with the help of data obtained by interacting in the target language with native speakers.

The relative failure of the comparative methodological studies together with the recognition that SLA can take place successfully in natural surroundings has had two major effects on how classroom SLA has come to be investigated. The first has been to query the assumption that underlay the methodological studies by asking whether instruction of any kind had any effect at all. The second has been to acknowledge the importance of examining classroom SLA as a process by studying the various interactions in which learners engage in pedagogic settings.

Long (1983a) provides an excellent review of the studies which have addressed what effect instruction has. He concludes:

> ... there is considerable evidence to indicate that SL (second language) instruction does make a difference.
> (Long 1983a: 374)

In other words the research indicates that those learners who receive instruction do better than those who receive exposure only to the target language in natural surroundings. Long argues that this conclusion holds true for children as well as adults,

for intermediate and advanced learners as well as beginners, on integrative as well as discrete-point tests and in acquisition-rich as well as acquisition-poor environments.

Given the thoroughness of Long's review, it would seem that the question of whether instruction makes any difference has been satisfactorily deal with. There are, however, a number of outstanding problems. The first of these has to do with what we understand by the term "acquisition". Long concerns himself exclusively with proficiency and the rate at which this is achieved. When he claims that instruction helps he means that it contributes to developing higher levels of proficiency in shorter periods of time. He does not address the equally important issue of whether instruction has any effect on the route of SLA, whether the "natural order" widely reported in the literature (see Krashen 1977 for a review) can be altered by presenting and practising items in a different order from that in which they are customarily learnt. There are a number of studies that have addressed this issue (see Ellis 1985a: chapter 9) and these suggest that instruction does not subvert the "natural order". As Allwright (1984a) puts it, the order of acquisition appears to be "impervious to context". Classroom learners follow the same route as natural learners (2).

So, although instruction has a positive effect on rate it has no effect on route. The question this raises is this: why do learners receiving instruction learn more rapidly than those who do not when all learners, irrespective of whether they receive instruction, learn the rules of the language in the same order? If the rapidity of acquisition in formal settings is not the result of learning items in the order in which they are presented and practised (for we cannot assume that the pedagogic syllabus and the learner's syllabus are the same), what is it due to? Or, to put it another way, how does instruction enable the classroom learner to progress along the same route more rapidly than the natural learner?

The second problem has to do with what we mean by instruction. There have been various attempts to identify the essential characteristics of instruction (see Stern 1983: chapter 21). Krashen and Seliger (1975), for instance, consider two ingredients basic to all methods: (i) the isolation of rules and lexical items of the target language and (ii) the possibility of error detection or correction. But there are a number of objections to such a definition. First, there are approaches to language teaching where neither of these criteria apply - the Bangalore Project, for instance, offers what Prabhu (1984) refers to as "meaning-focused activity in the classroom unrestrained by any preselection or prediction of language". In fact we do not possess a coherent and comprehensive definition of what is meant by "instruction" today.

The second objection is more serious. Even if we were to succeed in characterizing the nature of instruction by identifying its criterial characteristics, we would still not have moved

very far in our understanding of what happens when instruction takes place. As Allwright (1984a) points out, even if Krashen and Seliger's features are accepted as criterial they still "do not constitute the major ways in which classroom time is spent". The total complexity of teaching needs to be given due recognition and this will mean rejecting simple equations of instruction with whatever goes on inside a classroom, as appears to have been the case in the research that Long reviews. In order to understand this complexity we will need to examine the discoursal attributes of instruction and to detemine in what ways these differ, if any, from those that occur in naturalistic SLA.

The third problem with the role-of-instruction research that Long reviews has to do with how we can explain the results obtained. The research tends to assume that if learners who have received instruction do better than those who have not when total time learning the language is controlled for, then this demonstrates that instruction helps SLA. It is possible, however, that the advantage generally noted in classroom learners is not directly the result of the instruction per se. The research results can also be explained by hypothesizing that learners who receive instruction will tend to be those who are motivated to learn some near standard form of the target language, while those learners who stick to "street" learning will tend to be those who are relatively unmotivated to learn anything more than some pidginized version of the target language which meets their basic communicative requirements. In other words, instruction may appear to help only because it is confounded with some other primary causative variable, such as motivation.

The first response to the disappointment of the comparative method studies, then, was to investigate whether instruction, generically defined, has any effect on language learning. But, as I have just argued, this has not moved us much further on because it has not reconciled research findings about rate of acquisition with those about route, because no adequate definition of what is meant by instruction has been provided and because it is not clear whether instruction is to be considered directly or indirectly responsible for reported gains in learning. What has been missing are qualitative studies of what the relationship (if any) is between classroom discourse opportunities brought about by instruction and the actual learning that takes place. It is this recognition of the centrality of the discourse opportunities that has led other researchers (e.g. Allwright 1984b, Ellis 1985b) to examine in some detail the interactions that comprise language instruction and how these may contribute to language learning. The focus is not so much on instruction as a series of pedagogic goals or even as one or more methods but on the kinds of discourse which typically occur in pedagogic settings and the opportunities they afford for learning. As Allwright (1984b: 156) puts it, the aim is

> ... to consider interaction in the classroom not just as an

aspect of "modern" teaching methods, but as the fundamental fact of pedagogy - the fact that everything that happens in the classroom happens through a process of live person-to-person interaction.

Such an approach, which owes much to studies of the role of interaction in naturalistic SLA and also in first language acquisition (e.g. Hatch 1978, Wells 1981) calls for a qualitative exploration of classroom discourse in relation to learning before the quantitative treatments of the kind undertaken in the research reviewed by Long can begin.

My purpose in this paper is to develop a framework for making sense of the question "How does instruction affect SLA?". I am concerned not so much with trying to give a definitive answer to this question - I do not believe that one is possible at the present time - as with exploring what the question involves and what is required to set about answering it. I shall begin by looking at the independent variable of our problem - instruction - and argue in somewhat greater detail that the only satisfactory way of viewing this is in terms of the interactions that take place in the classroom. I shall turn my attention to the dependent variable - acquisition - and emphasize that in the study of classroom SLA attention must be paid to the systematic variability of learner-language. Finally, I shall suggest one way in which the relationship between instruction and acquisition can be understood and, therefore, researched.

"Instruction" as the independent variable

Three different ways of defining the independent variable can be distinguished; in terms of pedagogical goals, teaching methodology and classroom interaction. I shall consider each separately.

When instruction is viewed as pedagogical goals, what is taught is equated with the content of the syllabus, text book or the teacher's lesson plans. The research which this view of instruction will encourage will consist of attempts to correlate the teaching order with the learning order. Turner (1978), for instance, investigated three classroom learners, comparing the order of instruction of a group of grammatical morphemes with the order of acquisition of the same morphemes. Ellis (1984a) investigated the order of development of wh-interrogatives in thirteen ESL learners and attempted to establish whether this order could be modified if specific training in wh-interrogatives following a different order was provided. Neither of these studies showed that the teaching order could subvert the learning order. It would seem, therefore, that if instruction is viewed as pedagogical goals it is not very effective in achieving them. Learners do not learn in the same order as they are taught and, at best, the teaching syllabus and the learning syllabus are likely to be only loosely related. This is an important point to

emphasize as the teaching profession has traditionally operated on the assumption that teaching can directly influence learning in terms of the pedagogical goals.

A more promising approach is to view instruction as methodology by identifying a general framework which incorporates all the various approaches, methods and techniques (Anthony 1963) that can be used to teach a second language. Early attempts to construct such a framework have already been mentioned and a number of problems discussed. One way out of these may be to define methodology with reference to the types of language use which instruction of various types can invoke. McTear (1975), for instance, offers the following list of language uses:

(i) Mechanical (i.e. no exchange of meaning is involved).

(ii) Meaningful (i.e. language items are contextualized but no new information is conveyed).

(iii) Pseudo-communicative (i.e. new information is conveyed but in a manner that would be unlikely to occur outside the classroom).

(iv) Real communication (i.e. spontaneous speech involving a natural exchange of information).

A methodological definition of instruction can be reduced to a basic dichotomy which includes the four types of language use suggested by McTear. All instructional behaviour can be classified according to whether it requires a focus on form or a focus on meaning. A strong case for viewing methodology in this light has been presented by Brumfit (1984) in his distinction between accuracy and fluency.

How can viewing instruction as methodology help us to understand its role in SLA? Two possible approaches suggest themselves. One is to undertake a comparative study of instruction that is respectively rich in accuracy and fluency techniques. Although there are current projects designed to establish whether effective learning can take place when instruction consists more or less entirely of fluency work (e.g. the Bangalore Project), I know of only one attempt at a comparative study. Krashen (1981: 136) cites in a footnote a study carried out by Palmer (1979) in Thailand, in which one class of students received "traditional" instruction (in which I assume the focus was on accuracy), while another was taught using language games and peer communication activity (i.e. an approach rich in fluency work). This study, however, revealed no significant differences between the two groups (3). The second approach consists of the detailed study of samples of classroom interaction, selected to illustrate language use where there is, respectively, a focus on form and meaning. Ellis (1985b) is an example of such a study. The intention is to speculate on the differential opportunities for SLA afforded by various types of language use. This approach, which is the same as that associated with an interactional view

of instruction, will be considered in greater detail shortly.

The methodological view of instruction has led to little empirical research and extensive theorizing. Krashen (1981, 1982) has argued forcibly that for SLA to take place the learner needs to "acquire" rules by being exposed to comprehensible speech in natural communication rather than to "learn" them through formal study. He claims that in the classroom "acquisition" can be fostered only by instruction that provides for a focus on meaning rather than form. Brumfit (1984), while rejecting the "acquisition/learning" distinction as unscientific (among other things) also stresses the importance of fluency activities, although he does argue that accuracy training contributes indirectly to developing the knowledge required to participate in spontaneous language use (i.e. in Krashen's terms "learnt" knowledge can be converted into "acquired" knowledge). Both Krashen and Brumfit seek to support their views by referring to general SLA research, but neither are able to point to studies of classroom SLA that justify the positions they hold.

The methodological interpretation provides a sound basis for investigating the role of intruction in SLA. It draws attention to the fact that instruction cannot be conceived of narrowly as the isolation of rules and the provision of corrective feedback, as suggested by Krashen and Seliger (1975). Rather it must be viewed as the totality of language uses that can occur in a classroom, including both the raising of the students' consciousness about the forms of the target language (which, as Sharwood-Smith (1981) has observed, can take place in varying degrees and ways) and the exchange of information in ways close to or identical with natural conversation. Corder (1976: 68) comments:

> ... learners do not use their interlanguage very often in the classroom for what we call "normal" or authentic communicative purposes. The greater part of interlanguage data in the classroom is produced as a result of formal exercises and bears the same relation to spontaneous communicative use of language as the practising of tennis strokes to playing tennis.

The point is, however, that instruction can involve both "tennis strokes" and "playing tennis" and that any study of its contribution to SLA must both take account of this fact and seek to establish what role each type of language use has.

In the final analysis, however, whatever the methodology, instruction is manifested in specific patterns of interaction in the classroom. Viewing instruction as a set of pedagogic goals or methodological principles is simply to abstract away from what actually takes place - the verbal and non-verbal exchanges between the classroom participants. Approaches, methods and techniques reduce to ways of communicating, of interacting and transacting social and propositional information. All this is implicit in Brumfit's assertion of the primacy of fluency work:

> Only when there are messages being carried which are significant to the learner will there be full engagement with the linguistic code. (1984: 122) (4)

But the crucial dimension is, arguably, not whether there is a focus on meaning rather than on form, but whether the classroom interaction offers the learners the opportunities to build their interlanguages as a process of creative construction, forming and testing hypotheses about the rules of the target language. There may be a loose correlation between a focus on form and a narrow, restrictive style of interaction on the one hand and between a focus on meaning and a richer, facilitative style of interaction on the other, but this is not a necessary relationship. A focus on form can lead to flexible discourse opportunities (as, for instance, when two learners are set a linguistic problem to solve through discussion), while a focus on meaning can also lead to extremely limited exchanges (as, for instance, when information being conveyed is trivial or unmotivating to the participants). It is arguable, therefore, that we should not be talking about the extent to which instruction is oriented to accuracy or fluency, but about the degree of constraint or freedom inherent in the discourse and the way this controls how the learner uses the resources at his disposal (5).

If instruction is viewed as interaction the question regarding its role in SLA reduces to the much more general question concerning how discourse processes contribute to acquisitional processes, a question relevant to all types of SLA, not just classroom learning. The SLA literature suggests that interaction may contribute to learning in a number of ways:

(i) Interaction facilitates SLA by providing the learner with ready-made chunks of speech which he can memorize as "unanalysed wholes". Hatch (1983) has referred to this type of speech as "canned speech". It occurs extensively in naturalistic SLA (see Krashen and Scarcella 1978) and can also figure in classroom SLA, particularly when the target language serves as the medium of instruction. Ellis (1984b) illustrates how routines, patterns and even longer scripts are learnt by classroom learners to help them perform the regular social transactions of classroom business. These are picked up from constant exposure to their use in familiar contexts.

(ii) Interaction can also contribute to SLA by enabling the learner to build structural patterns which lie outside his linguistic competence. He does this by exploiting the discourse he participates in to form vertical structures or to establish the time reference of his own utterances. Long and Sato (1984) illustrate how many of the features of interlanguage can be explained by the learner working on the discourse in various ways to enable him to maximize his existing resources.

(iii) Interaction also serves as the means by which specific grammatical forms are modelled for the learner and thereby subconsciously acquired. There is evidence to suggest a positive and significant correlation between input frequency and learning order (e.g. Hatch and Wagner-Gough 1976, Larsen-Freeman 1976). This correlation also holds good for classroom input (Long and Sato 1983), although Lightbown (1983) has suggested that classroom input may have a delayed rather than an immediate impact.

(iv) The major contribution of interaction to SLA, however, may be to provide the learner with comprehensible input. Both Krashen (1982) and Long (1983b) have argued that comprehensible input is the primary causative variable of SLA. It is through interaction that the negotiated modification of input takes place so as to ensure that understanding and therefore acquisition take place. The importance that has been attached to a focus on meaning as opposed to form can be seen as part of the more general need for interaction where negotiation occurs so as to enable the input to be tuned to an appropriate level to facilitate learning.

When instruction is viewed as interaction classroom SLA can be considered in the same light as naturalistic SLA. This explains why the "natural order" of acquisition is not altered by instruction, for instruction functions in the same way as natural discourse, as the matrix in which learning takes place. This assumes, of course, that the interaction which occurs in classrooms is similar to that which occurs in informal settings. Allwright (1984a), however, considers this unlikely. He points out that classroom discourse differs from natural discourse in the provision of a feedback move, the distribution of talk among the participants and in the frequency and distribution of question types. The problem facing classroom SLA researchers taking a discoursal perspective is, according to Allwright, to explain why the order of development is not influenced by instruction, when instruction involves discourse that is radically different to that occurring naturally. The solution to this conundrum can be found if it is recognized (i) that SLA is a variable phenomenon and (ii) classrooms can and do provide natural discourse, at least on occasions. I shall return to this issue later, after I have looked at the other side of the coin - acquisition as the dependent variable.

"Acquisition" as the dependent variable

Studies of classroom SLA (e.g. Pica 1984, Ellis 1984a) have attempted to establish whether the order of development of both grammatical morphemes and of transitional structures such as interrogatives or negatives is the same as or different from that found in naturalistic SLA. The general picture that emerges from

this enquiry is that the order of development is surprisingly invariant from one context to the other. All learners, irrespective of their environment, appear to progress along a more or less standard route when they acquire a particular L2 (2).

However, in order to understand the nature of classroom SLA, it is necessary to take account not only of the universality of the developmental path, but also of another primary characteristic which it shares with naturalistic SLA - the systematic variability of interlanguages (6).

The study of variability in interlanguage owes much to sociolinguistic enquiry into language use (e.g. Labov 1970, Bickerton 1975). Two major types of variability have been identified and described - situational and contextual variability. Situational variability involves the alternation of two or more linguistic forms in accordance with extralinguistic factors to do with the scene and the participants. Contextual variability is evident when the language user varies his use of linguistic forms in accordance with the linguistic environment, such that one form is used in environment (a) and a second, different form in environment (b), etc.

Both types of variability occur in interlanguage. It is well-known, for instance, that classroom learners are able to use a target rule in a language exercise, but then "backslide" by falling back on a more primitive interlanguage rule in ordinary communication. Using Labov's methodology, Dickerson (1975), Schmidt (1977) and Tarone (1983), among others, have shown that learners systematically vary their use of interlanguage forms according to the kind of elicitation task they are given and depending on the degree of attention the task allows them to pay to the form of their utterances. Similarly it has been shown that learners vary in their use of specific forms according to the linguistic context; Dickerson (1975) for instance found that the phonetic quality of specific phonemes produced by Japanese learners of English varied according to the phonetic environment of the sounds.

In order to account for these patterns of variable use by L2 users, Tarone (1983) has proposed that the learner be credited with a variable competence, which she refers to as his "capability". This consists of the knowledge "which underlies regularities in learner production and perception, writing and reading, as well as ... judgements of grammaticality" (Tarone 1983: 151). The knowledge constitutes "regularities" rather than "rules". Thus, interlanguage capability is to be seen as a series of styles ranged between the two poles, which Tarone calls the vernacular and the careful. The vernacular style is associated with data obtained from unattended speech, while the careful style is associated with data obtained from grammatical judgement tasks.

Acknowledging that learner-language is variable and that this reflects an underlying variable competence poses the SLA

researcher an important question. In what sense is it possible to talk about a "natural order" of development, when at any one stage of development the learner possesses not just one rule but two or more competing rules? Or, to put it another way, when claims are made about a universal order of acquisition that is impervious to context, which interlanguage style is being talked about? I want to stress that we cannot really address the role of instruction in SLA until we take account of interlanguage variability. This is not just because failure to do so is methodologically unsatisfactory, but because the whole question of what happens when learners receive instruction cannot be understood outside the perspective of a variable interlanguage. In order to consider the relationship between instruction and acquisition we must examine the role of variability.

The relationship between instruction and acquisition

To summarize the position I have outlined so far: I have argued that in order to approach the question about what role instruction has in SLA we need to define both the independent and the dependent variables with some care. Instruction (the independent variable) is best understood in terms of the different types of interactions which take place in the classroom. In particular a distinction can be drawn between those interactions which are tightly controlled by the teacher and which are likely to be linked with a focus on form and those interactions where there is the chance to negotiate understanding and which are likely to be focused on meaning. Interaction is the bed in which the learner's interlanguage is conceived and nourished. Acquisition (the dependent variable) is characterized at one level by regularity such that it is impervious to changes in setting. Thus we find that classroom SLA proceeds along the same route as naturalistic SLA. But acquisition is also characterized by horizontal variability such that the learner manifests different rules in different situations and contexts. In order to understand how instruction affects acquisition we need to consider why, despite differences in the typical types of interaction in pedagogic and natural settings, classroom learners appear to learn in the same way as naturalistic learners. The answer lies in exploring the relationship between instruction, manifested as different types of classroom interaction, and the development of the learner's variable interlanguage system.

If it is accepted, as I have argued, that the processes of interaction serve as the mechanism by which acquisition takes place, it follows that (i) these processes must be reflected in classroom instruction or else different developmental orders would emerge, and (ii) these processes account for the patterns of variability inherent in any interlanguage, whether formed in a natural or pedagogical setting. In order to explain these conclusions we need to posit that classroom discourse is varied in the opportunities for interaction and therefore acquisition which it affords and also that the apparent universality of inter-

languages is in fact a reflection of a single style rather than the entire capability continuum.

Classrooms afford a multitude of interactional types depending on who is addressing who (teacher/class or student/student, for instance) and also the interactional goal, in particular whether this is "pedagogic" or "framework" (i.e. to do with the recognized content of the lesson or with the organization and management of various kinds of classroom behaviour). Classroom discourse can be ranged along a continuum according to whether it is "unplanned" or "planned" (Ochs 1979). Unplanned discourse is discourse that lacks forethought and that has not been organized in advance. It is most clearly evident in spontaneous communication when the speaker is concerned with getting his meaning across. Planned discourse is discourse that has been organized prior to expression and, as Ochs notes, is most evident in transactional writing, where the language user is not only concerned with content but also with expression and is likely to monitor both with considerable care. Lakoff (undated) in an interesting discussion of the planned/unplanned continuum identifies a number of key dimensions which characterize the differences between the two poles (referred to as "oral dyad" and "expository prose"). These are:

Unplanned (oral dyad)		Planned (expository prose)
+	visibility	-
+	reciprocity	-
+	informality	-
+	spontaneity	-
+	empathy	-
+	inconsequentiality	-

Thus, at one end of the continuum is discourse characterized by the participants being able to see each other, interchangeability of roles between the interactants, informality, spontaneity and inconsequentiality in the sense that the participants see the communication having little import beyond the immediate context. The other end of the continuum consists of discourse where the participants cannot see each other, roles are fixed and there is little or no turn-taking, the exchanges are formal and organized, there is no sense of joint endeavour and a strong sense that what is communicated will be in some way consequential. In between these two poles there are various types of discourse that have one or more of these properties (and in varying degrees) but not all.

It is not difficult to apply such an analysis to the interactions that typically occur in classrooms. When the teacher exercises close control over the discourse in the familiar IRF exchange pattern, as is customary in a language drill, the discourse will verge towards the planned end of the continuum. Thus, there will be an absence of reciprocity, spontaneity and empathy while the exchanges will tend to become formal and to be consequential, as defined by Lakoff. In contrast, when the

students are engaged in group work, using the target language to discuss some problem, the discourse is likely to be unplanned, marked by reciprocity of turns, informality, spontaneity, probably empathy and less awareness of the consequentiality of the communication. Unplanned discourse can also occur in teacher/class interaction as in the countless management tasks which teachers cope with in the course of everyday instruction. Thus we can loosely link the provision of planned discourse with Brumfit's accuracy and unplanned discourse with fluency.

Now, what I wish to argue is that instruction seen in this light offers opportunities for the acquisition of different interlanguage styles. That part of instruction that leads to unplanned discourse will aid the formation of the learner's vernacular style, the style associated with everyday conversation and which, in the eyes of most teachers and students, is primary. That part of instruction that leads to planned discourse - which in classrooms that emphasize accuracy is likely to be predominant - will aid the formation of the learner's careful style, the style associated with expository writing, intensive reading and discrete point tests. Classrooms will differ from natural settings only in the degree to which planned and unplanned discourse take place. Traditionally, formal instruction in the language classroom gave primacy to planned discourse, emphasizing the avoidance of error and correction procedures. In contrast natural settings give rise to mainly unplanned discourse. Classrooms can, however, be organized to give more emphasis to unplanned discourse, while natural settings can be controlled by some learners (the non-risk-takers?) to afford chiefly planned discourse.

We have, therefore, an explanation for why interlanguage is varied. It is an explanation that applies equally to naturalistic and classroom SLA and which can potentially explain the similarities and differences between the two acquisitional types. The stylistic continuum which Tarone (1983) describes is both the product and the reflection of participating in different types of discourse ranged along the planned/unplanned continuum. The vernacular style results from and is called upon when the learner takes part in unplanned discourse. It is here that the various interactional processes (formulaic speech, vertical structures, the modelling of specific forms with different levels of frequency and comprehensible input), which earlier it was suggested contribute to acquisition, operate. Learning how to take part in everyday face-to-face interactions requires having the opportunity to do so. Conversely, the careful style results from and is called upon when the learner takes part in planned discourse. Because different kinds of knowledge and different processes of language use are involved in the different discourse types it cannot be expected that the acquisition of one style will facilitate the use of another style. Classroom learners who have been exposed to more or less continuous planned discourse will have difficulty in using their knowledge when called upon to participate in unplanned discourse, as my own personal school language learning experiences testify.

There is, however, a relationship between the learner's vernacular and careful styles. This is, in fact, implicit in the notion of a continuum, as one style gradually blends into another and the division into discrete categories serves only as a descriptive convenience. This is where Tarone's view of SLA differs radically from Krashen's. Whereas Krashen deals in a dichotomy and rejects any possibility of transfer from the "learnt" to the "acquired" store, Tarone deals in a continuum and allows for the "spread" of knowledge initially associated with the careful style towards and eventually into the varnacular style. Tarone's interpretation, it is interesting to note, accords more easily with Long's (1983a) conclusion that the available research does show a positive effect for instruction where rate is concerned. If we accept Tarone's view that interlanguages are built in two ways, directly by the learner producing simple structures in his vernacular style and indirectly from the spread of forms that enter interlanguage in the learner's careful style, then it is not unreasonable to expect that instruction which caters for the careful style linked to exposure that caters for the vernacular style will prove more successful than exposure alone.

The view of the relationship between instruction and acquisition which is proposed also helps to explain why the route of acquisition remains apparently immune to the effects of instruction. The "natural order" is a reflection of the vernacular style only. Krashen (1981) makes this quite clear. It will appear only in performance that is Monitor-free. In discrete point tests and also in some writing tasks a different order emerges. Thus the "natural order" is a concomitant of a particular type of language use - that which I have called unplanned discourse. Any means of data elicitation which taps unplanned discourse and therefore the learner's vernacular style will and must reveal the "natural order", while any means of data elicitation which taps planned discourse and the learner's careful style will reveal a different order, as a result of the attention the learner has paid to the form of his utterances. Instruction, then, cannot affect the "natural order" of development because this is the product of spontaneous language use. Not only, then, is it unsurprising that instruction fails to subvert the "natural order" but, from the point of view of variability theory, it becomes a meaningless issue to research.

Conclusion

In this paper I have sought to clarify a number of issues to do with the role played by instruction in SLA. Previous research has shown that (i) instruction facilitates rapid development of a L2 and (ii) instruction does not alter the "natural order". This research, however, has suffered from a rather imprecise conceptualization of "instruction" and also from a failure to pay sufficient attention to the systematic variability of interlanguage systems. My purpose has been to address these two issues.

I have argued that instruction cannot be construed simply as time spent in a classroom, as pedagogic goals or even as methodology, even when this is defined in global terms such as Brumfit's accuracy/fluency distinction. Instruction must be understood as the total set of interactions in which teacher and students participate. The acquisition of a L2 entails the development of a variable interlanguage system, which, following Tarone (1983), can be referred to as the learner's capability. The relationship between instruction and acquisition can now be understood as the relationship between different types of interaction (which can be plotted on a capability continuum ranging from the careful to the vernacular). It is posited that the classroom setting differs from a natural setting in degree rather than kind. Thus classrooms are more likely to stress planned discourse, although this need not necessarily be the case. We might expect classrooms to lead to rapid learning if learners have the opportunity to experience a range of discourse types either in the classroom itself or in a combination of classroom and natural setting. We cannot expect instruction to influence the "natural order" of development because this order is an artefact of the vernacular style.

In order to increase our understanding of how instruction aids (and perhaps also impedes) SLA we need to progress on two fronts. First, we need detailed qualitative analyses of classroom interactions in the recognition that the learning process is part and parcel of the communication process. One way in which this can be undertaken is in the context of an ongoing longitudinal study of individual classroom learners. The case study approach to classroom language learning has been sadly neglected. Second, we need quantitative studies of the kind now under way at OISE (see Allen et al. 1983), where attempts are being made to relate features of classroom interaction to specific learning outcomes. In particular we should be interested in examining to what extent opportunities to participate in unplanned and planned discourse have on the development of a variable interlanguage system.

Notes

(1) An exception to this generalization is the Total Physical Response Method. Studies carried out by Asher and his co-workers (see Asher 1977 for a review) indicate that this Method leads to more learning than other methods. It can be noted that this Method produces classroom interactions of a radically different type to other methods, at least in the early stages.

(2) There is not total agreement about the universality of the "natural order". Lightbown (1984), for instance, emphasizes that counterfactual studies do exist. Her own work (e.g. Lightbown 1983) also shows that instruction can lead to a different order, although the evidence she produces suggests

that this is only temporary.

(3) Krashen explains these results by the fact that the experimental class received greater emphasis on communication but was not taught using the target language as the medium of instruction. Thus it received less "teacher talk", and the opportunities for "real communication" may have been evened out. This interpretation reinforces the central argument of this paper, namely that instruction should always be viewed as interaction, not as method.

(4) One of the major differences between Brumfit's formulation and the one I am proposing here is that accuracy is conceived of as involving "usage" and fluency "use", while I envisage all instruction as use of one kind or another. If instruction is viewed as interaction it is no longer possible to argue that some instructional acts involve "usage" and others "use".

(5) It should also be noted that many of the interactions that occur in classrooms are neither clearly accuracy-oriented nor clearly fluency-oriented. Allwright (1984b) points out that lessons are characterized by a series of "minor diversions" necessitating efforts to steer round and over obstacles. Thus "genuine communication" can arise at any time, even when the primary focus is on accuracy.

(6) Not all variability is systematic (see Ellis 1984c). Here I consider only systematic variability, but non-systematic variability has an important part to play in the development of the vernacular interlanguage style.

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II : SECTION PAPERS

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VERB PHRASE IN A BILINGUAL CHILD

1. Introduction

There has been much debate on the question whether the simultaneous acquisition of two languages from birth is similar to the acquisition of either of these languages in monolingual children and if so, to what extent this similarity manifests itself (see e.g. McLaughlin, 1978). Unfortunately, there has been little in the way of methodologically sound research that could give an answer to the above question. The present investigation is an attempt to change this situation. In it, the speech production of a girl exposed to both English and Dutch from birth onwards is examined as far as the use of the verb phrase is concerned. The methodology used is similar to that current in contemporary studies of children growing up monolingually. This is necessary if any comparison with the speech productions of monolingual children is to be valid. The data for the acquisition of Dutch in monolingual children are scant, especially when compared to the extensive corpora that exist for English. In this paper the Dutch comparison material mainly draws on the publications by Tinbergen (1919) and Schaerlaekens (1977). The English comparison material is more diversified and will be referred to where relevant.

The working hypothesis is that if the developmental errors occurring in the speech of the bilingual child are similar to those occurring in monolingual children and if those errors occur at approximately the same stage in development and in the same order (for both languages), then there is reason to assume that a bilingual child's acquisition of two languages more or less equals the acquisitions of those languages separately. This in turn has important implications for theories of bilingual functioning which will be dealt with in greater depth in the concluding remarks. Of course the present investigation cannot prove the above hypothesis since it only concerns itself with a very limited area, but at least the findings from it may indicate the extent of its validity.

In a previous paper (De Houwer 1983) it was established that the development of the verb phrase in the speech of the bilingual girl (pseudonym: Kate) who is the subject of the present study proceeded in an independent fashion for both languages. This means that forms used in the one language were not, in general, referable to forms used in the other. In connection with this, the principle of morphological language stability was proposed which predicts that within the context of a particular language, bound morphemes from the other language will not appear. Thus bound morphemes do not 'travel' between languages. In the present investigation, then, the data from both languages will be

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treated as closed sets and intra-language developments will be focused upon rather than inter-language phenomena.

2. Analysis and discussion

The subject of this study is a healthy, normal girl who has always spoken English with her American mother and Dutch with her Flemish father. She was audio-recorded in her home in Antwerp, Belgium, between the ages of 2;7,12 and 3;3,16 with an average of 10 days between each recording. Kate's speech was recorded while she was interacting freely with either one or more of the following adults: her parents, visitors to the home and the investigator. All in all, 3,629 fully understandable child utterances were transcribed. Transcriptions include utterances directed at the child and situational information as well. The present analysis considers all the child's utterances which contain a verb form.

2.1. Dutch

2.1.1. Finite verbs in the present

The group of finite verbs in the present includes all lexical verbs, all modal verbs, ZIJN (= BE) in all uses and HEBBEN (= HAVE) in all uses. A first question is to what extent the child has learned to conjugate the verb.

First of all it should be noted that Kate has fully acquired the notion of congruence. This means that most utterances containing a verb form at least include a finite verb, whether that finite verb is in the adult form or not. More often than not, a subject is made to correspond to a finite verb. There are utterances without an overt subject, however, but in these cases we are usually dealing with an elided subject that is perfectly clear from the linguistic or situational context. Significant is that even in these subject-less utterances there is a finite verb. Tinbergen (1919) mentions that in the course of the monolingual child's third year, the notion of congruence establishes itself. Examples of utterances by the boy whose language development he is reporting on show that utterances containing a finite verb but no overt subject appear in a monolingual child's speech production as well.

When we take a closer look at the non-adult-like forms that Kate produces when forming finite verbs, a first quantitative analysis shows that no developmental pattern can be observed. There are not more or fewer non-adult forms as time goes on. It should be noted that 'non-adult forms' here means: 'the non-adult-like use of a particular subject with a particular finite verb'. The forms by themselves are usually adult-like. The exceptions occur with HEBBEN (= HAVE) and KUNNEN (= CAN). On the whole 11.2% of all finite verbs in the present have an unambiguously non-adult form. Thus at the same point in development, and seen over a period of 8 months, adult and non-adult forms exist side by side. This finding corresponds with that of Tinbergen, who found the same phenomenon in Luuk, his monolingual Dutch subject.

A qualitative analysis of the types of errors that Kate

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produces shows a similar lack of developmental pattern. There are a number of error-types, but the proportion of each remains fairly constant over time. The most frequent error-type shows an inappropriate influence of the conjugation of the third person singular and/or the second person singular. An example is:

(1) Kate: Ik valt in 't water. (3;0,11)
(= I falls in the water.)

Here a 't' is added to the stem where the stem by itself would be the adult form. This 't' is characteristic of the formation of the third person singular of regular verbs and also appears in the second person sg. when there is no inversion. However, third person sg. influence seems to be the more realistic explanation in view of the errors that occur with irregular verbs, where third person sg. influence is the only possible explanation. A clear example is:

(2) Kate: Waar is jij? (3;3,16) (= Where is you?)

Here the third person sg. form 'is' is used rather than the second person sg. form 'ben'. The second most frequently occurring error pattern can be explained by the fact that the wrong stem is chosen to conjugate the verb. This type of error mostly occurs with the modal verbs MOGEN (= MAY) and KUNNEN (= CAN) (see Note 1) which exhibit a vowel change in their conjugations. An example is:

(3) Kate: Kun-kun kinne kikker deronder? (2;10,13)
(= Cun-cun cin- frog under there?)

Here the stem of the infinitive KUNNEN is taken instead of the changed stem KAN. A third type of error is produced when only the stem is realised rather than the stem and an appropriate morpheme. Other types of errors are quite rare.

The types of errors produced by Kate in the formation of finite verbs in the present closely resemble those that appear in monolingual acquisition. Tinbergen says that the third person sg. usually gets an appropriate 't' but that occasionally this 't' is absent. The same can be said of Kate. Tinbergen mentions that a rather more frequent error is the addition of 't' to the stem for the first person sg. Again the evidence from Kate shows this also to be the case. Tinbergen does not discuss the conjugations of the modal verbs and neither do Schaerlaekens (1977) or Extra (1978), so the data for Kate cannot be compared. Tinbergen does mention that very occasionally 'en' is added to the stem when the subject is singular ('en' is the plural morpheme). This type of error is also made by Kate. Kate does not, in general, use many plural subjects. When she does, often the verb is in the singular rather than in the plural. Exactly the same pattern is observed by Tinbergen.

The above comparison must remain rather vague and general, unfortunately. The reason is that there are no exact quantitative details available on the acquisition of Dutch verbs for the age range that we are dealing with. A second point is that for Dutch there is nothing like a fairly ob-

jective measuring-rod as Mean Length of Utterance (Brown, 1973). Thus the only basis for comparison is age, with all the implications that this entails. With these limitations in mind, then, a comparison of the conjugation patterns for the use of finite verbs in the present between monolingual children and our bilingual subject shows that qualitatively the same types of errors are made. In addition, similar types of errors are most frequent. In neither the monolingual nor the bilingual data does any major shift from one type of error to another occur and the general distribution of errors remains constant. Thus the acquisition of adult conjugation patterns for finite verbs in the present is a long and arduous process that starts some time after the second birthday and presumably is not finished until the fourth birthday.

In the analysis above it was said that both quantitatively and qualitatively no development could be discerned in the bilingual data as far as the conjugation of finite verbs is concerned. This general conclusion blurs the fact that there is a developmental pattern to be discerned in the conjugation of HEBBEN (= HAVE). At the beginning of the study all the forms of HEBBEN in the present are adult-like. Then, after the middle of the study, non-adult forms start to appear as well. Adult forms continue to be produced. A Spearman rank correlation test found no correlation between the total number of occurrences of HEBBEN over time and the total number of non-adult forms of HEBBEN. An example of a typical error is:

(4) Kate: Heef jij da gezien? (3;3,9)
(= Has you seen that?)

Here 'heef' is produced instead of 'heb'. 'Heef' is clearly derived from the third person sg. form 'heeft'. The studies of monolingual children do not mention anything about HEBBEN. It may be that precisely because of the lack of quantitative analyses this phenomenon may have gone unnoticed. Be it as it may, the finding for HEBBEN here cannot be compared to monolingual data. A possible explanation for the phenomenon observed might be that before the occurrence of non-adult-like forms of HEBBEN, all the adult forms were products of rote-memorisation. Only when the non-adult forms start to appear has the child begun to realise that there is some sort of pattern to be found in the so-far unanalysed forms. The fact that no such shift occurs in the conjugation of other finite verbs in the present indicates that some forms may be acquired in a piecemeal fashion (see also Fletcher 1981) whereas others are acquired in a paradigmatic way. This hypothesis is very tentative, and needs a lot more evidence. In addition, the question needs to be tackled why it is that some forms seem to follow the 'word by word' developmental pattern and that others develop in a more paradigmatic way. This, however, is beyond the scope of the present investigation.

From the beginning of the study Kate uses modals in a totally adult-like fashion as far as the syntagmatic rela-

tionships go. In adult usage, modals can be used with or without an infinitive. Kate uses both possibilities appropriately. Tinbergen writes that his monolingual Dutch subject uses modals from a very early age onwards. His examples show that these modals are always used in an adult fashion. Here again there is a similarity between the monolingual and bilingual data.

In connection with the non-adult forms that appear in the conjugation of verbs in the present, Tinbergen remarks that the child always uses the correct analogies: only analogies from within a particular paradigm occur. This is the case for Kate as well.

A point that is not explicitly mentioned by either Tinbergen or Schaerlaekens but that is clear from the examples they give is the fact that monolingual children use the appropriate syntagmatic relationships: modals combine with infinitives or direct objects, auxiliaries combine with past participles, finite lexical verbs appear on their own, with non-verbal complements or objects, the copula occurs with a subject complement etc. The same can be said for Kate: syntagmatic use of verbs is always adult-like. Kate has learnt what goes with what. Theoretical possibilities such as the combination of a finite lexical verb and an infinitive do not occur. This point may be an obvious one, but it is highly significant. Long before the morphological rules are learned, the child has acquired all the syntactic constraints operating on the combination of verbs (all semantic constraints are not fully acquired until a much later age - see e.g. Bowerman 1974). An explanation of this phenomenon will not be offered here.

Finally, both Schaerlaekens and Tinbergen mention that occasionally some monolingual children conjugate a lexical verb in the present by using a periphrastic form made up of a finite form of DOEN (= DO) and an infinitive. No such constructions appear in the speech production of Kate. This does not necessarily mean that we are dealing with a major point of difference: not all monolingual children use this DOEN-periphrasis, so if Kate does not use it either she is not very different from at least some monolingual children.

2.1.2. The expression of future and past time reference

From the beginning of the study Kate frequently and 'correctly' uses GAAN + infinitive to express inchoative meaning and to refer to an action which situates itself in a slightly more distant future. Towards the end of the study, sometimes ZULLEN + infinitive is used to express an intention to carry out an action in the future. Both Tinbergen and Schaerlaekens write that around the age of 3 the monolingual child frequently uses the form GAAN and infinitive to express an inchoative meaning. Rather later does the use of ZULLEN and infinitive appear. Again the monolingual and the bilingual data are similar as far as order of appearance of certain forms is concerned.

Schaerlaekens states that the expression of future time (through the use of verbs) appears before the expression of

past time reference (again as far as the use of verbs is concerned). Since the data in the present study are not diary data this claim cannot be tested, but the fact that in the beginning of the study many forms referring to the future and very few forms referring to the past appear is certainly consistent with such a hypothesis. In addition forms referring to the past only start to appear with any frequency towards the end of the study.

The expression of past time reference through verbs in monolingual children is first realised through the compound tense that combines an auxiliary (HEBBEN or ZIJN) and a past participle. Extra (1978), Schaerlaekens and Tinbergen all state that the use of the simple past tense to refer to the past is a very late development. When the simple past does appear, it at first only has a modal meaning. These findings are confirmed by the bilingual data: Kate uses a simple past form only twice, and when she uses it the forms refer to some hypothetical play situation. In addition, simple past forms appear only at the end of the study whereas from the beginning the compound tense with auxiliary and past participle is used (this is not in contradiction with statements made in the preceding paragraph: past forms appear from the beginning, but very infrequently. Those that do occur are present perfect forms. Towards the end of the study there is a marked increase in the number of occurrences of past forms. Two of those are simple pasts.). The literature on monolingual children also states that the present perfect is always used (around the age of 3) to refer to an action in the past and that a resultative notion may be present as well. This usage is fully adult-like. Kate also uses the present perfect in this way.

At first, all of Kate's past participles except one have an adult form. Most of the past participles used are irregular, strong verbs. As was pointed out before there is a marked increase in the use of the auxiliary-cum-past participle syntagm, and this increase is accompanied by a marked increase in the number of weak verbs and in non-adult-like past participles. The non-adult-like forms show no clear pattern or strategy, but the over-generalised application of the regular GE + STEM + /t/ pattern is most frequent. Noticeable is that again adult and non-adult forms appear side by side. Errors are made both on the weak verbs and on the strong verbs. In addition non-adult forms of transitional verbs (which are half regular and half irregular) occur. Extra (1978) says that at the time when children start using the past participle formation rules productively (no age is stated, however) they use a STEM + /t/ rule in the formation of weak past participles i.e. they leave out the prefix 'ge'. Extra adds that at later stages of development it is this prefix that is lacking in the formation of regular past participles rather than the suffix /t/ or /ən/. Tinbergen also mentions that at around the age of 2 (when his subject's first past participles began to appear) the prefix does not occur, then is rendered by /ə/, and then is fully present. In the bilingual data 'ge' is absent only twice so we may hypothesise that Kate

has passed the stage in which 'ge' is not explicitly present. Apart from the development of the prefix 'ge' as indicated by Tinbergen, past participles of strong verbs first appear in their adult form in monolingual children. Later the patterns for regular past participle formation are applied to strong verbs. There also is influence from irregular verbs on one another and wrong vowel changes occur regularly. Kate's erroneous past participle forms follow this general developmental pattern, although influence from one irregular verb on another is rare. The literature on monolingual children does not, however, state whether at the over-generalisation stage the child still produces correct irregular forms. In addition it is not clear whether monolingual children make other errors on regular past participles than the omission of 'ge' as indicated by Extra (see above). Both these features occur in the data from Kate. More complete reports on monolingual language development are needed to clarify this issue. As it stands, the bilingual data are consistent with the general pattern that obtains for monolingual acquisition.

In Dutch two auxiliaries are used with past participles. The choice is determined by the meaning of the lexical verb and by aspectual properties. In general, Kate uses the appropriate auxiliary. There are only three instances where she uses ZIJN instead of HEBBEN or vice versa. Tinbergen confirms that the choice of the right auxiliary is not always successful but that inappropriate choices are very rare. Again there is a similarity between the mono- and bilingual data.

A final point is, as Tinbergen remarks, that the monolingual child is at the same time working on the present tense, compound tenses, the past participle and the congruence of subject and verb. Kate is doing the same thing: it cannot be said that from point X to Y the present tense is in the process of being acquired for instance, and that after 'acquisition' of this tense, past participles are worked on. On the contrary, everything takes place at once. However, certain developmental changes do occur. These concern the acquisition of the conjugation pattern of HEBBEN, the acquisition of ZULLEN + infinitive and the use and form of the present perfect tense.

In general, then, Kate resembles a monolingual child as far as the order of acquisition of verb forms goes. There is not much that can be said about the rate of acquisition since no objective means of measurement exists on the basis of which this could be compared. However, similar forms seem to appear at around the same ages.

We now proceed to look at what happens in English.

2.2. English

2.2.1. Finite verbs in the present

At the beginning of the study Kate is well into Brown's (Brown 1973) stage V with an M.U of 3.36 and an upper bound of 19. This fact gives a rather more stable ba-

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sis for comparison than just age as was the case for Dutch.

All English verbs in the present (so including irregular verbs) except two are adult-like. The first exception is:

(5) Kate: Cause we have to be careful otherwise it break. (3;1,13)

This utterance is immediately followed by a repair:

(6) Kate: So breaks. (3;1,13)

The second exception concerns the verb BE:

(7) Kate: Look what is you doing? (3;1,12)

In the monolingual literature there is very little information on the acquisition of the conjugation patterns of verbs in the present. Brown (1973) mentions that both the third person regular and irregular are acquired before the auxiliary BE and the contractible copula BE. Acquisition as defined by his 90% criterion is complete at Stage V of language development. Since in 99% of the 'obligatory contexts' (with all the problems that this notion entails - see Fletcher 1979) Kate uses the third person singular morpheme 's' it is safe to say that this morpheme has been acquired and that hence Kate is no different from monolingual English-speaking children in this respect.

The modals WILL, SHALL and CAN are used throughout the study, and syntagmatically their usage is always adult-like. Fletcher (1979) writes that the use of modals is very frequent in children around the age of 3 (and under). The modals that appear most often are WILL and CAN. Again, the data for Kate are comparable to those for monolingual children. Very occasionally Kate uses HAVE TO followed by an infinitive.

The verb HAVE is always used as lexical verb, never as auxiliary. This again is confirmed by the monolingual data: Brown states that at Stage V children do not in general use HAVE as an auxiliary. In adult speech, HAVE is used with a past participle to form a present perfect tense. This is the only use of HAVE as auxiliary (uses of HAVE in sentences as 'I had him cut the lawn' can be said to be modal in nature). According to Fletcher (1979) this use of HAVE with a past participle does not occur until towards a child's fourth birthday. It must be noted here that Kate does not use HAVE inappropriately i.e. as auxiliary with an ing-form or with an infinitive (although theoretically this would be possible). The monolingual literature does not report on such unusual usage of HAVE either.

Very occasionally, Kate uses the modals SHOULD, WOULD and MAY, and then only towards the end of the study. According to Fletcher (1979) these are very uncommon in monolingual children at this stage as well.

The verb DO occurs both as lexical verb and as auxiliary from the beginning of the study. Usage (in the present)

AVAILABLE

is always adult-like. Fletcher (1979) notes that in monolingual children (and in Leopold's English-German daughter Hildegard) the auxiliary DO is used with frequency towards the end of the third year on. Brown (1973) does not discuss the use of DO. Again there is a similarity between Kate and other children who are learning English.

Kate uses the present continuous tense (BE + ing-form) abundantly from the beginning of the study. The ing-morpheme is never attached to anything but the base form. This was also noted by Cazden (1973) for monolingual English children. Brown (1973) has found that the ing-form is a very early acquisition in monolingual children. Kate both uses the contractible and the uncontractible auxiliary BE. Usage is always adult-like. At stage V, monolingual children usually have acquired both the contractible and uncontractible uses of the auxiliary (Brown 1973). On three occasions Kate does not supply an auxiliary when she uses a gerund. Here she shows remnants of a probable earlier stage of development where a subject was immediately followed by the gerund. This stage is characteristic of younger (monolingual) children. Both Brown (1973) and Fletcher (1979) write that the ing-form is only used with non-stative verbs. The same can be said of Kate. Thus, in general, Kate again shows similarities with monolingual children.

As in Dutch, Kate usually expresses a subject when she uses a finite verb. Only very occasionally does a finite verb appear without an overt subject. The monolingual literature does not report on this phenomenon (this does not mean that it does not occur). When Kate produces a subjectless utterance the subject has been elided, and the result sounds fully adult-like. Most utterances without overt subject are of the 'Want some XX?' type. In general, the plural is used very rarely. Plural 'you' never occurs. It also seems to be absent in monolingual children at this age.

In general, then, Kate's use of finite verbs in the present closely corresponds to monolingual children's use of them.

2.2.2. The expression of future and past time reference

From the beginning of the study the BE + GOING TO + infinitive syntagm and WILL or SHALL + infinitive are used to refer to a future action or event. Fletcher (1979) notes that from the middle of the third year WILL and GOING TO are used to refer to the future in another bilingual child and in monolingual children. Again the bilingual data are consistent with data from other children who are learning English.

In addition Kate uses the present continuous of the verb GO to indicate a future action. Usage is fully adult-like. The literature consulted does not mention this usage in monolingual children.

Rather more attention has been given to the development of past time reference through the use of verbs in the mono-

lingual acquisition literature. Cazden (1973) notes that irregular past forms are often used correctly by the child before (s)he starts to overgeneralise. She adds that the temporary co-existence of the correct irregular form and the overgeneralisation is common. Smith (1980) writes that English-speaking children before the age of 4 tend to indicate pastness with past tense inflection. According to Brown (1973) the past irregular is an early acquisition. The past regular is acquired shortly afterwards. This interpretation has been sharply criticised by Kuczaj (1977) who maintains that the irregular past is much more difficult to acquire than the regular form. According to Kuczaj, the regular past tense is fully acquired at age 3; the irregular past tense is not acquired until 4;6. Kuczaj suggests the following development: first the child correctly uses syntactically unanalysed irregular forms and some generic verb forms of these irregular verbs to refer to the past; then the child starts using regular past forms, irregular pasts with 'ed' added to the base form and irregular pasts with 'ed' added to the irregular past form. The child may be using both correct and incorrect forms of the same verb simultaneously. All researchers agree that the present perfect is a very late development. Fletcher (1979) mentions that his subject Daniel used regular pasts and overgeneralised strong verbs between the ages of 2;2 and 2;5. Other children may have acquired the regular past formation only much later, at age 4;0, for instance (see Brown 1973). There does seem to be a lot of variability as to when particular forms are acquired by monolingual children, but the developmental pattern as outlined above (Kuczaj 1977) does seem to be the same.

From the beginning of the study, Kate refers to the past using a 'simple past'. Usage of this tense is very infrequent, however, and only becomes more frequent towards the end of the study (i.e. from 3;1,18 onwards). Both regular and irregular verbs are used from the beginning, and their forms are always adult-like. All in all 41 simple pasts are used.

A comparison between the bilingual and the monolingual data is not straightforward. Two possibilities exist (as pointed out before by De Houwer 1983): either Kate has acquired both regular and irregular past formation or she has not. The first possibility seems very unlikely in view of the general infrequency of past forms and in view of the fact that in monolingual children acquisition of irregular past formation is a much later development (in fact, Bybee & Slobin 1982 suggest that irregular pasts are not fully acquired until the child is well into his school age years). The second possibility is more likely: probably Kate is still at the stage where past forms are unanalysed and are the result of rote-memorisation. The element that is different from monolingual children is that Kate produces both correct irregular and regular verbs, whereas the monolingual literature mentions only the correct use of irregular verbs, after which correct regular verbs and incorrect irregular verbs are produced. At this stage some correct irre-

gular verbs may appear as well (cf. Cazden 1973, Kuczaj 1977). Here, then, we are dealing with a discrepancy which may be explained by either incomplete reporting in the monolingual literature or by indeed a difference between monolingual and bilingual language development. A third possible reason is individual variation in both mono- and bilingual children: some monolingual children may behave just the same way as Kate, but these children have just not been studied.

Kate does not use the present perfect during the whole period of the study. This is consistent with the monolingual literature which claims that the present perfect is a very late development. Kate does use past participles, but they are always used attributively. They always have the adult form.

Occasionally Kate uses 'did' followed by the base form in negatives and interrogatives. Usage of this syntagm occurs from 3;1,12 onwards. Before this, 'did' is used once with an irregular past in a question and once with the infinitive in an affirmative sentence (i.e. when adults would only do this for emphasis). Fletcher's Daniel (Fletcher 1979) starts using 'did' at around the same time.

Except for the lack of overgeneralised irregular verbs, or, except for the presence of regular pasts and the absence of incorrect irregular pasts, Kate refers to both future and past the way monolingual children of around the same age tend to do.

3. Conclusion

The present investigation has shown that on the whole the development of the verb phrase in a bilingual English-Dutch child proceeds along the same lines as the development in monolingual children acquiring either English or Dutch. For both languages the only discrepancy concerns past formation: in both English and Dutch forms appear that are not reported on in the monolingual acquisition literature. Reasons for this may be an oversight in the monolingual studies possibly due to unnoticed individual variation among children, or indeed an existing difference between bilingual and monolingual development that can be attributed to the very fact that the bilingual child is learning two languages rather than one. The latter is unlikely (see De Houwer 1983). At any rate, in general Kate resembles two monolingual children in one as far as her use of verb forms goes.

Of course the present investigation has been very preliminary: it has only been a 'catalogue of forms', with all the limitations that this entails (see Fletcher 1979). In future research an analysis of time adverbials and particles will have to be carried out as well. In addition, an approach that starts from a semantic notion and that traces the development of the expression of that notion may prove fruitful. In the present paper a rather adult-centered view was taken in which present forms were assumed to refer to present time etc.

A rather significant finding is that syntagmatically, usage is fully adult-like at all times: the child has learnt what goes with what in both languages. The child never hears parts of verb phrases from one language combined with parts of verb phrases from the other language. Neither does she produce any. One may hypothesise that this shows that the child is using deferred imitation strategies to produce the syntagms. This links up with theories that take a holistic approach to language acquisition (see Peters 1983). While syntagmatic relationships are an early acquisition, paradigmatic relationships are not. It takes the child a long time to discover what morphemes are used when. Yet before the child has fully analysed the relevant rules, a kind of Gestalt-type knowledge is present about what morphemes go with what type of verb: only overgeneralisations from within the appropriate paradigm occur. As time goes on, this Gestalt-type knowledge is completed by a more analytic type of knowledge. This filling-in process may take place in a piecemeal fashion: rather than proceeding by constructing hypotheses about a host of linguistic elements at once, the child may concentrate on only a few selected areas at the time. A similar view has been expressed by other researchers as well (see e.g. Fletcher 1981, Kuczaj 1977). The data in this paper do not contradict such a claim: there is evidence that for some types of verbs no development took place over the period of observation whereas for other types radical changes occurred.

The findings of the present investigation have far-reaching consequences for theories of bilingual functioning: if both languages are learnt separately - which, as far as the verb phrase is concerned, is the case - then there is reason to assume that psycholinguistic functioning at a later stage will remain separate for both languages. After all, it is not efficient to reorganise two separate knowledge structures into one if the output of the two separate systems is adequate and appropriate. Of course, some overlap between the two systems may occur, especially on the lexical level.

The conclusions and hypotheses presented in this paper are, of course, all very tentative in nature. Much more study is necessary. It does seem clear, however, that the right question to ask is not: 'How does a bilingual keep his or her languages separately?' but rather: 'What are the factors that determine whether a bilingual grows up speaking two separate languages?'. It is hoped that more detailed and methodologically sound studies of bilingual language acquisition will be undertaken in an attempt to answer this question.

Note

1. Translations are approximate and only given as guidelines.

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The Associated Examining Board's

Test in English for Educational Purposes (TEEP)

Allan Emmett
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WHAT HAS THE LEARNER LEARNED? PROFICIENCY TESTING IN A COMMUNICATIVE PERSPECTIVE

What I wanted to read to you was a paper written by Dr Cyril Weir and myself about research carried out on analysis of linguistic demands and needs of students from overseas studying in higher and further education. The research was carried out over four years by Cyril Weir and covers a vast area. It was research which has enabled us now to offer a new test in English for Educational Purposes. I shall be talking about only a small part of it and I have realised that, since our test called TEEP, has been designed to tell receiving institutions and the students how well the latter might be expected to perform in an English-medium academic environment, the title might be better worded if it read: "What do teachers and students in higher and further education hope the student will have learned?"

In Pursuit of the Communicative Paradigm

In the wake of a greater emphasis on communication in language teaching, a similar paradigm shift is apparent in recent approaches to language testing, which take, as their starting point, language in use as against language usage. These approaches are influenced by a sociolinguistic model of communication where the concern is with the abilities and processes at work as speakers - in this case second language learners - attempt to handle the formal and functional dimensions of speech acts relevant to their needs in given situations.

In order to evaluate samples of performance, in certain specific contexts of use, created under particular constraints, for what they can tell us about a candidate's underlying competence, in an academic environment, it would first be necessary, we thought, to develop a framework of categories which would help us to identify the activities our target group would be involved in. Only then could we construct realistic and representative test tasks corresponding to those activities. By applying these

categories at the prior test task validation stage we would hope to avoid some of the problems which had arisen in some earlier efforts at communicative testing where no attempt was made to produce explicit specifications of the candidates' projected language needs in the target situation before test task construction took place. Though we would be cautious in claims for the directness of fit possible between test realisation and specification, we would argue that this approach has enabled us to come closer to matching test tasks with appropriate activities in the target behaviour than would be possible using non-empirical approaches.

This paper presents a brief description of how we at the Associated Examining Board (AEB) attempted to ensure the content validity of our tests of English as a foreign language for overseas students. The three initial research and development stages reported here were carried out in the context of a project which started in 1978 to develop a Test in English for Educational Purposes (TEEP). This test would have particular application for students wishing to enter institutions for further or higher education in the United Kingdom. The aim of the test is to provide a profile of a candidate's proficiency in listening, reading, writing and speaking which will reflect how well or badly he or she might be expected to cope with the English language demands of an educational environment, and to provide diagnostic information to ESL programs for such students.

STAGE I: Whom to test?!

In Stage I of the TEEP project we established the levels, the discipline areas and the institutions where overseas students were enrolling in the further and higher education sectors. On the basis of the information gathered during this stage, we focused our research on students following courses in the general subject areas of science, engineering, and social, business and administrative studies, although we would also maintain that the test has applicability in other disciplines as well.

STAGE II: What to test?

In Stage II, we sought to ascertain the communicative demands that are made on students following courses in these general discipline areas. Two methods of enquiry were employed to determine the language tasks facing students in a number of different academic contexts.

During 1980, we carried out a series of visits to educational institutions in different sectors of tertiary education. Observations of science, engineering, and social science courses were made at the Universities of Exeter, London and Reading and also at colleges in

Farnborough, Bradford, Newbury and Padworth. During these visits, the general language tasks facing students taking part in lectures, seminars and practical classes were recorded using an observation schedule derived from the Schools Council Science Teaching Observation Schedule (Egglestone et al., 1975) and from John Munby's Communicative Needs Processing Model (Munby 1978). The data generated by these exercises provided us with the framework for our second method of enquiry: the questionnaire (See Weir, 1983a and b for a more detailed discussion of this stage).

During 1981 we contacted all the university and polytechnic science, engineering, and social science departments and colleges offering General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced Level science, where we knew from earlier research that there were large numbers of overseas students, and asked them to assist us in our project. We then asked those who were willing to co-operate to let us have details of the numbers of overseas students, for whom English was not the first language in the country of origin and who were enrolled in specific courses within their departments, together with numbers of the staff who taught them. Questionnaires were then sent to staff and through them to both British and overseas students. Completed questionnaires were received from 940 overseas students, 530 British students and 559 staff in respect of 43 postgraduate courses, 61 undergraduate courses and 39 "A" level centres.

In the questionnaire we asked the students to estimate the frequency with which certain events and activities occurred in respect of the total programme of study they were enrolled on. They also provided us with a general estimate of the amount of difficulty various activities and constraints caused them. The staff were asked to give an overall impression of the frequency of occurrence of various activities on the programme we had specified, with particular reference to the courses they taught. They were also asked to estimate the proportion of overseas and British students, in these courses, who had encountered difficulty with particular activities or under particular constraints.

In terms of the type of question that we were able to ask in the questionnaire, reading and writing differ from listening and speaking in that it was easier to ask a more complete set of frequency questions about reading and writing because they are relatively free of the performance constraints that affect the latter. Although we were able to collect data in respect of the level of difficulty these activities and constraints caused in listening and speaking, for various reasons it was often not possible to

collect data on the frequency with which they occurred.

Questionnaire results

I have a number of tables which summarize the questionnaire returns concerning the frequency with which students had to carry out various communicative activities in the academic context and relative levels of difficulty encountered by overseas students as compared with their British counterparts in coping with these tasks and attendant performance constraints.

Difficulty Each table summarizes the data collected for one skill (listening, reading, writing, speaking). The activities and performance constraints related to that skill are listed in the table according to the percentage of overseas students who reported having "some" or " a lot" of difficulty in each area. The second column provides a modified rank order of difficulty for these students calculated by deducting the percentage of British students reporting similar difficulty.

Tables 1, 3 and 4 also present data from university staff members on their perception of the relative difficulty of the various activities and performance constraints which they felt would apply to overseas students. The results are based on the percentage of staff reporting "some" or "a lot" of difficulty. As before, there is also a modified rank order representing the difference between the estimates of overseas and British students experiencing difficulty. Table 3 (writing) also presents an estimate of the relative importance of the specified criteria according to the percentage of staff who marked each one as being of "high" or "medium" importance.

Frequency Frequency data are reported in Tables 1a, 2a, 3a and 4a for subsets of the items listed in Tables 1-4. These data summarize responses from overseas students studying in various disciplines with respect to the frequency with which they were required to use English in the specified areas. Within each discipline group, the percentage of students reporting either that they "never" had to do the task or were "often" required to do it is indicated in these tables.

We took the frequency data separately or, where possible, in conjunction with the difficulty data, and we tried to establish what might be considered as "key" activities and constraints across levels and disciplines. As most tests can only sample a limited part of the possible domain it seemed prudent to ensure that we included in the battery those tasks which were common and frequent across disciplines and levels and/or, seemed from

the available evidence, more likely to cause problems for the overseas as against the British students.

STAGE III: How to test

During the third stage of the project, we were concerned with designing and validating a variety of test formats to establish the best methods for assessing a student's performance level on those tasks and under those constraints that the research had indicated to be important to overseas students following academic courses through the medium of English.

The pilot version of the test battery contained two components. The first, Session I, was designed to be taken by all students. The texts, considered to be accessible to candidates from all disciplines, were selected from the area of "general science". The second component, Session II, had two versions. Session IIA was intended for students in the fields of arts, social sciences, business and administrative studies. Session IIB was intended for students in the fields of science and engineering. The texts in both versions were selected from written and spoken sources in the appropriate discipline area, and test tasks in both Sessions IIA and IIB were parallel.

In Session I and both versions of Session II, candidates are required to demonstrate their proficiency in reading, listening and writing. A variety of test formats are used in Session I and Session II to test a candidate's proficiency in the range of enabling skills required to operate successfully in the various study modes. These are in Session I, a lecture and, in Session II, a seminar, testing specifically the constituent enabling skills underlying abilities in reading, listening and writing, we also included a more intergrated task in each of the Sessions, in which reading and/or listening activities lead into a writing task.

Pre-tests of Session I and both versions of Session II were carried out on groups of GCE, Advanced level, first year undergraduate and one year post-graduate native and non-native students in the academic disciplines mentioned above. About 900 students were involved in taking sessions I and II A or B. Of them about 200 were English native speakers as a control group.

A third session testing ability in spoken English, was prepared in collaboration with the Association of Recognised English Language Schools with whom the test will be jointly administered. This Session was pre-tested with a number of overseas students in various educational

establishments, most of them A R E L S Schools.

The pre-tests of all sessions and a number of other checks enabled the Board to carry out a great deal of internal and external validation of the tests. This in turn enabled the determination of the final format of the examination.

By following the stages of test development outlined in this paper and incorporating the results as much as possible into the test format, we have tried to ensure that the final form of this examination will provide an accurate profile of the candidate's ability to cope with the language demands of an academic environment.

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TABLE 1 *Rank order of difficulty experienced in listening tasks as estimated by students and staff

Task	OS	OS-BR	Staff OS	Staff OS-BR
Teachers and other students talk very fast	1 (55.0)	2 (35.7)	-	-
Accents or pronunciation differ from the accustomed	2 (52.7)	3 (27.6)	-	-
Writing down quickly and clearly all the desired notes	3 (41.5)	10 (8.9)	-	-
More than one person is speaking (eg: group discussion)	4 (41.1)	4 (26.4)	-	-
Understanding informal language	5 (38.6)	1 (36.9)	3 (52.5)	1 (47.5)
Thinking of and using suitable abbreviations	6 (33.9)	7 (21.7)	-	-
Understanding spoken description or narrative	7 (31.0)	6 (26.3)	2 (53.2)	2 (41.9)
Recognising individual words in what is being said	8 (30.8)	6 (26.3)	-	-
People speak quietly	9 (29.3)	13 (2.3)	-	-
Recognising what is important and worth noting	10 (28.0)	12 (5.8)	-	-
Understanding completely what was said and linking it to what was said earlier	11 (23.6)	9 (12.9)	-	-
Understanding spoken instructions	12 (21.1)	8 (19.2)	4 (44.1)	3 (35.3)
Organising notes so they are comprehensible later	13 (18.2)	15 (-0.3)	-	-
Understanding the subject matter of the talk	14 (18.1)	14 (0.5)	1 (66.2)	5 (21.4)
Recognising where sentences end and begin	15 (9.9)	11 (7.8)	-	-
Making notes	-	-	5 (40.2)	4 (17.6)

* Rank based on percentage of those reporting "some" or "a lot" of difficulty. Actual percentage reported in brackets.

OS = Overseas students
OS-BR = Difference between overseas students and British students having difficulty
Staff OS = Staff estimate of overseas students having difficulty
Staff OS-BR = Staff estimate of difference between overseas and British students having difficulty

TABLE 1 a. *Estimated frequency of performing specific listening tasks based on the highest returns (Never and Often)

Task	Engineers U Never	Engineers U Often	Engineers P Never	Engineers P Often	Science U Never	Science U Often	Science P Never	Science P Often	Science A Never	Science A Often	Social Sciences U Never	Social Sciences U Often	Social Sciences P Never	Social Sciences P Often
Understanding Spoken Instructions	20-39	20-39		60-79	20-39	20-39		40-59		40-59		40-59		60-79
Making Notes				40-59		20-39								

U = Undergraduate
P = Postgraduate
A = Advanced level GCE

*Range of Frequencies expressed as a percentage

TABLE 2 *Rank order of difficulty experienced in reading tasks as estimated by students

Task	OS	OS-BR
Reading texts where the subject matter is very complicated	1 (67.9)	7 (8.4)
Critical reading to establish and evaluate the author's position on a particular topic	2 (55.3)	2 (21.8)
Reading quickly to find out how useful it would be to study a particular text more intensively	3 (49.7)	1 (26.2)
Search reading to get information specifically required for assignments	4 (39.6)	3 (18.3)
Reading carefully to understand all the information in a text	5 (35.0)	6 (8.5)
Making notes from textbooks	6 (25.9)	5 (12.7)
Reading to get the main information from a text	7 (25.8)	4 (14.3)

* Rank based on percentage of those reporting "some" or "a lot" of difficulty. Actual percentage reported in brackets.

OS = Overseas students
OS-BR = Difference between overseas students and British students having difficulty

TABLE 2 a. *Estimated frequency of performing specific reading tasks based on the highest returns (Never and Often)

Task	Engineers U Never	Engineers U Often	Engineers P Never	Engineers P Often	Science U Never	Science U Often	Science P Never	Science P Often	Science A Never	Science A Often	Social Sciences U Never	Social Sciences U Often	Social Sciences P Never	Social Sciences P Often
Critical reading to evaluate author's position on particular topic	40-59		20-39		40-59		20-39		40-59			20-39		40-59
Scanning to establish utility of more intensive text reading	20-39	20-39		20-39	20-39	20-39		20-39	20-39			20-39		40-59
Search reading to fulfil an assignment		40-59		60-79		40-59		60-79		20-39		80+		60-79
Reading carefully to understand all information in:-														
- duplicated notes		40-59		60-79		40-59		60-79		20-39		40-59		40-59
-questions done in class or for home-work		40-59		40-59		40-59		40-59		40-59		40-59		20-39
-laboratory worksheets		60-79	20-39			20-39		20-39	20-39	20-39	40-59		40-59	
-examination questions		40-59		40-59		20-39		20-39		40-59		20-39		20-39
-textbooks whole or part		20-39		40-59		40-59		60-79		20-39		60-79		60-79
Making notes from texts	20-39			20-39				20-39		20-39		60-79		60-79
Reading to get the main information from a text				20-39		20-39		40-59		20-39		40-59		60-79

U = Undergraduate
P = Postgraduate
A = Advanced level GCE

*Range of frequencies expressed as a percentage

TABLE 3 *Rank order of difficulty experienced in writing tasks as estimated by students and staff

Task	OS	OS-BR	STAFF OS	STAFF OS-BR	STAFF IMPT.
Using a wide and varied range of vocabulary	1 (61.9)	1 (41.2)	5 (66.9)	3 (30.1)	10 (41.3)
Using a variety of grammatical structures	2 (47.2)	3 (30.7)	4 (70.0)	5 (17.7)	12 (22.2)
Using appropriate volcabulary	3 (46.4)	2 (34.2)	7 (63.8)	1 (33.2)	4 (69.6)
Expressing what you want to say clearly	4 (40.8)	7 (14.5)	3 (70.2)	4 (21.5)	2 (90.9)
Using appropriate grammatical structures	5 (40.4)	4 (24.8)	2 (71.4)	2 (30.6)	8 (43.3)
Arranging and developing written work	6 (35.8)	8 (13.7)	6 (65.5)	9 (10.3)	3 (82.1)
Writing grammatically correct sentences	7 (33.5)	5 (20.7)	1 (75.3)	6 (16.3)	6 (46.9)
The subject matter	8 (29.9)	6 (18.8)	9 (60.6)	10 (10.2)	1 (91.8)
Spelling	9 (24.3)	10 (2.0)	8 (62.1)	8 (11.3)	9 (42.3)
Punctuation	10 (21.4)	9 (8.9)	10 (59.6)	7 (12.9)	11 (39.3)
Tidiness	11 (16.8)	12 (-5.3)	12 (47.1)	12 (-4.3)	5 (62.8)
Handwriting	12 (14.2)	11 (-4.1)	11 (49.4)	11 (-2.3)	7 (44.6)

* Rank based on percentage of those reporting "some" or "a lot" of difficulty. Actual percentage reported in brackets.

OS = Overseas students
OS-BR = Difference between overseas students and British students having difficulty
Staff OS = Staff estimate of overseas students having difficulty
Staff OS-BR = Staff estimate of difference between overseas and British students having difficulty
Staff Impt. Staff estimate of importance of criterion based on "high" and "medium" ratings

BEST C

TABLE 3a *Estimated frequency of performing specific writing tasks based on the highest returns (Never and Often)

Task	Engineers				Science						Social Sciences			
	U		P		U		P		A		U		P	
	Never	Often	Never	Often	Never	Often	Never	Often	Never	Often	Never	Often	Never	Often
More than a paragraph in:														
coursework	40-59		40-59		40-59		20-39		40-59		20-39	20-39		20-39
examinations	40-59		40-59		40-59		20-39		40-59			20-39		20-39
About a paragraph in:														
coursework	20-39		20-39			20-39			20-39		20-39	40-59		20-39
examinations	20-39		20-39		20-39	20-39			20-39			20-39		20-39
Less than a paragraph in:														
coursework	20-39		20-39		20-39	20-39		20-39		20-39		40-59		20-39
examinations	20-39		40-59		20-39	20-39	20-39	20-39		20-39		20-39		60-79

U = Undergraduate
P = Postgraduate
A = Advanced level GCE

* Range of frequencies expressed as a percentage

TABLE 4 *Rank order of difficulty experienced in speaking tasks as estimated by students and staff

Task	OS	OS-BR	Staff OS	Staff OS-BR
Giving oral reports or short talks	1 (50.3)	1 (38.4)	7** (39.9)	10** (12.3)
Expressing counter-arguments to points raised by teachers in discussions	2 (48.1)	4 (26.6)	3 (54.4)	6 (17.9)
Explaining your opinions when they are not immediately understood in discussions	3 (45.9)	3 (27.7)	2 (55.3)	3 (23.8)
Expressing counter-arguments to points raised by other students in discussions	4 (45.0)	2 (29.8)	5** (47.8)	7** (17.2)
Expressing your own opinions in discussions	5 (37.2)	4 (26.7)	4 (50.6)	1 (25.2)
Answering questions asked by teachers	6 (31.6)	6 (20.9)	1 (63.2)	5 (19.6)
Asking teachers questions	7 (22.0)	7 (17.5)	6 (46.8)	4 (23.3)
Answering questions asked by other students	8 (19.3)	9 (12.7)	8** (31.0)	8** (12.8)
Working with other students using English to communicate	9 (18.7)	8 (16.4)	9 (30.8)	2 (24.0)
Asking other students questions	10 (14.5)	10 (11.9)	10** (23.3)	9** (12.4)
Actively taking part in discussions				

* Rank based on percentage of those reporting "some" or "a lot" of difficulty. Actual percentage reported in brackets.

OS = Overseas students
OS-BR = Difference between overseas students and British students having difficulty
Staff OS = Staff estimate of overseas students having difficulty
Staff OS-BR = Staff estimate of difference between overseas and British students having difficulty

** High proportion of "don't know"

TABLE 4 a. *Estimated frequency of performing specific speaking tasks based on the highest returns (Never and Often)

Task	Engineers U Never	Engineers U Often	Engineers P Never	Engineers P Often	Science U Never	Science U Often	Science P Never	Science P Often	Science A Never	Science A Often	Social Sciences U Never	Social Sciences U Often	Social Sciences P Never	Social Sciences P Often
Giving oral reports or short talks	40-59		20-39		40-59		40-59		40-59					20-39
Answering questions asked by teachers	20-39	40-59				40-59		20-39		40-59		60-79		40-59
Asking teachers questions		40-59		20-39		40-59		20-39		40-59		20-39		20-39
Working with other students using English to communicate		80+		40-59		40-59		40-59		40-59		60-79		60-79
Actively participating in discussions		20-39		20-39		20-39		20-39		20-39		40-59		40-59

U = Undergraduate
P = Postgraduate
A = Advanced level GCE

* Range of frequencies expressed as a percentage

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LEARNING LANGUAGES THROUGH VARIOUS MEDIA

I. Introduction

Before I talk about the role of the individual media in language learning, I would like briefly to place their development in a historical perspective. Our technological age is by no means the first 'revolution in communication'; the invention of the computer followed swiftly upon the advent of the mass media, as indeed upon other inventions before that, such as that of the printing press, and before that the invention of the alphabet.

As an example of the fears expressed by educationalists over the invention of the alphabet I quote a passage from Socrates' Phaedrus:

> The discovery of the alphabet will create forgetfulness in the learners' souls, because they will not use their memories; they will trust to the external written characters and not remember of themselves... You give your disciples not the truth but only the semblance of truth; they will be heroes of many things, and will have learned nothing; they will appear to be omniscient and will generally know nothing (in McLuhan 1967: 113).

Socrates attacks any knowledge that has not been gained through disputation or argument, which for him represent the best ways of learning; he fears that if we entrust our knowledge to the written mode, we stop using our own memories - and in a way he was right.

The invention of the printing press about 500 years ago gave rise to a similar crisis in education. The general availability of the printed book went hand in hand with a simultaneous spread of literacy. Although we take the printed book for granted as a teaching medium today, it met with great opposition in its time. It is, for example, recorded that in the 16th century the University of Salamanca protested against printed books, on the grounds that they were likely to deprive the teachers of their livelihood (Deighton 1971: 508).

The emergence of the mass media has ushered in a new era in education, as they have tried to meet the demands made by new educational concepts. The relatively new educational philosophy of not only 'universal' but also of 'lifelong' education can only be achieved with the aid of these same mass media. An important factor is the way in

which educational broadcasting has played a significant levelling role in reducing the differences in levels of knowledge between people, and in helping to extend learning opportunities to all age groups.

The introduction of computers to the educational scene is again opening up completely new possibilities; hitherto, new technologies have helped to facilitate communication by making it faster and more efficient. Now for the first time we have intelligent machines which can make their own contribution to knowledge, we have what is known as 'artificial intelligence'.

The fears and warnings accompanying the computer age have actually accompanied every one of the revolutionary periods mentioned, and these fears and warnings are quite justified for the following reasons. Every newly invented technology not only precipitates change in the area of its immediate impact but it also changes the whole social system. As McLuhan (1968: 64) points out, "each new impact shifts the ratios among all the senses". Each new medium calls for skills different from those required by the medium it replaces, such as when going from an oral to a written code or, as is the case at the present time, when new abstract skills are being learnt. These shifts in the way we process information are also accompanied by slight redefinitions of what constitutes 'intelligence'. Whereas sheer memorising ability used to be considered an important part of being intelligent, now, with the availability of rapid data retrieval, memory is less important to intelligence; factors such as 'creativity' or 'innovatory flair' seem more pertinent. Also, in converting to new technologies, people today face problems which are very similar to those which arose in earlier phases of human development, problems such as the loss of the human (i.e. interpersonal) factor, the acquisition of new skills which make some of the hitherto highly valued skills suddenly obsolete, the resultant career shifts, the need for new and massive capital investment etc.

The period of adjustment to a new medium or technology is understandably usually a long one; and it takes even longer before the new media can be fully exploited in terms of their educational potential; for we must not forget that none of the media mentioned was originally devised for instructional purposes, they are all simply information-carrying technologies that can also be used for instruction. Decades had to pass before books were used to their full educational potential, and it took television exactly ten years (i.e. from the 1954 to the 1964 Television Act) before educational programmes became a statutory requirement. Nowadays we have adjusted to - and take for granted - books, films, radio and television, and we are in the process of adjusting to computers. And although we are aware of all sorts of exciting new possibilities the media can offer to the language-teaching process, most media are really still looking for their proper role to play in language teaching.

II. Advantages and Disadvantages of Individual Media for Language Learning

Media, according to Salomon (1979: 3), are "our cultural apparatus for selecting, gathering, storing, and conveying knowledge in representational forms. Representation, as distinguished from raw experience, is always coded within a symbol system". There are various systems which we use for decoding and recoding information; Gross (1974: 60), for example, distinguishes five primary modes of symbolic behaviour that roughly characterise a culture, they are a) the linguistic, b) the socio-gestural, c) the iconic, d) the logico-mathematical, e) the musical. Media are consequently technologies plus the symbol system or a mix of symbol systems that develop in association with them.

The argument underlying the following section is that each medium, including the tutor (=personal medium), is particularly good at presenting one aspect of language teaching and not so good at presenting others, that every medium has its own rationale, its own characteristic way of presenting things.

The book: Its obvious advantages such as portability, neat packaging, permanence of the printed word, make it highly suited for self-instructional purposes; the fact that we can control our own pace of learning and are not restricted to any particular time or place also makes for more effective information processing. The limitations of the book as a medium for language teaching lie mainly in the fact that print as 'frozen language' has to be supplemented by sound from either a cassette or the tutor.

Radio and sound cassette: Radio programmes, which used to be an important part of the BBC multi-media language courses in the past are no longer used so much for learning foreign languages. Since most people today own cassette recorders, and since there is an ever-increasing shortage of air time, cassettes have basically taken over the oral part of media-centred language courses, being far more versatile and almost as flexible as books as far as student control is concerned. Not only can the audio cassette (and the radio) provide authentic foreign voices, the human voice guiding the learner through the programme can also give audible clues about the intended meaning of words and sentences. The radio is assuming a slightly different role today: it is used less for learning but more by the producer to reach the students and explain to them the facts about the course, as well as for phone-ins, and to get some feedback from the students about the programme.

Television and video cassette: Television is a particularly rich medium in that it uses a wide variety of symbol systems, such as moving and still visuals, spoken and written language, music, dress, gesture, dance etc.

Because television can show language in contextual use, i.e. in genuine or authentic social situations, including paralinguistic features (such as postures, social gestures, facial expressions, tones of voice etc.), it approximates more closely to real speech situations than any other medium. Moreover, television or film-specific techniques such as close-ups, long-shots, flash-backs, zoom-ins, slow or speeded-up motion etc., make it possible to gain an even fuller perception of an event than might be obtained by personal attendance; and what is more these techniques are also more interesting to watch because they invite a deeper processing of the information than, for example, a linear presentation. Another of television's unique strengths lies in its ability to present 'topicality': the programmes Télé Journal and Heute Direkt, for example, presented the news from France and Germany the very night they were shown in the respective countries; and an even further extension of this facility will be brought to us with satellite television. The main value of television, however, is its ability to motivate and to enrich; it enhances the understanding of linguistic and cultural situations, and understanding and motivation are, after all, essential parts of the learning process.

On the other hand a television programme in itself is hardly suited as a vehicle for learning a language. Its limitations and disadvantages lie not in the symbol systems it uses but in its technology: television programmes are one-off broadcasts, over which the student has no control; they present a flow of fleeting impressions which roll on and do not allow any time for reflection. A second disadvantage of television programmes is that they are a one-way communication system, there are no practical channels for any feedback or for any interaction between learner and teacher.

However, the recent advancement in video technology, the shift from reliance on broadcast television to reliance on video cassettes has opened up interesting new possibilities for language learning; in fact, a similar change of roles like the one from radio to audio cassette has taken place from television to video cassette. Consequently this has led to a different structuring of content according to the social context of learning: television as a one-off broadcast is directed at a mass audience, so it needs to be of some general appeal (cf., for example, the new BBC language programmes Prima and Excuse my French). In the development of the video cassette, two distinctively different designs are, according to Brown (1984: 52-3), likely to emerge: the first design, for group use, will use more open-ended stimulus material and will stress open-ended analysis and discussion. The second design will be intended for individual use and will constitute a move towards more interactive forms of video; these will be much more structured in their design, with

frequent questions, guidance and feedback. Together with a printed text the video cassette would form a fully integrated video package.

Computers: One of the computer's strongest points, which no other medium can offer, is its interactive ability: the computer can respond to the individual learner and provide immediate and - for example by use of complex branching - differentiated feedback. Most computer language programmes operate on the same principle: the student is presented with some material, he is then asked a question and, according to the answer given, the computer determines what further steps to take. Not only can the computer respond to individual mistakes, it can even switch to different learning strategies if the learner fails to progress with a particular sequence. Moreover, it can do much more than just respond, it can also challenge the learner by posing new problems. Many learners consider the computer's lack of emotionality to be another of its strong points. The machine seems to have unlimited patience with the slow learner, and it is also very consistent. Research with disturbed children, for example, shows that these children do not object to learning as such but to being taught by people, particularly by people who are inconsistent, unpredictable, or who become angry or bored in the course of communication.

Because of their ability to respond and provide feedback, computers are ideal for individualised learning and self-study, and it is not merely coincidence that this new technology is going hand in hand with the new educational trend towards individualising the learning process. The areas for which the computer has mainly been used in language teaching so far are: question and answer routines, grammar drills, vocabulary revision, comprehension exercises - all areas which are normally counted among the most tedious aspects of language teaching and learning. There are, however, some developments which not only point towards more enjoyable learning but which also exploit more computer-specific techniques, for example the development of language games, such as word games, guessing games, matching games or adventure games.

And now to turn to the limitations of the computer. The computer can only provide feedback by using information which is stored in its memory; there is no room for spontaneous interaction as there is with a tutor. And, compared with the human mind, the computer falls short in many more aspects: it has no emotionality, no intentionality and no volition, which, in the human mind, are all interrelated with cognition. Also, the computer's answers are not based on understanding, they come about by sheer formal logical causation. In other words, the computer has only rules, no understanding (or: it has only syntax, no semantics). Another serious drawback as far as language

teaching is concerned is that computers are currently not able to cope with speech simulation; although it is possible to synthesise the human voice, anything but the most expensive equipment tends to produce something resembling - as Davies (1982: 55) puts it - "a Dalek with laryngitis".

The tutor: It is only with a tutor that we can have a) a social learning situation and b) real communication at all levels. It is a social learning situation in the sense that the tutor can give immediate feedback to individual learners, but unlike the situation with regard to the computer, the interaction can be spontaneous, and tutor and learner(s) can arrive at a mutual understanding. Real communication at all levels implies that the tutor can interpret human behaviour (for example by inferencing or anticipating thought), and take into account emotional and other psychological factors as well as paralinguistic features. In short, the tutor can cope with all levels of behaviour, he is still the most flexible and the most adaptable teaching system.

There are also qualities in the personality of the tutor, which can facilitate learning, qualities such as integrity, understanding, trust, warmth and sensitivity. Such factors can only be fully activated in interactive tutor-based learning, whereas other equally important factors such as expertise and competence apply also to media programmes. There are two further factors which are specific to tutor-based learning and which it shares with a live performance (as opposed to a recorded or 'canned' performance). The first one is the sense of suspense, which has a motivating effect on students' attention in class, the second one is the sense of immediacy which obtains in a live performance/class, and which motivates attention to a similar degree because it gives a sense of direct participation.

The limitations of the tutor probably lie to a large extent exactly where his strength lies: in his personal qualities, or rather in the lack of them. In other words, personality clashes between tutor and learner can inhibit learning. Furthermore, the tutor normally also has to employ some technical aid in order to provide a degree of 'authenticity' to the foreign language (and to the foreign culture) which he himself, unless he is a native speaker, cannot provide.

III. Factors Involved in Learning from the Media

Nothing in the learning situation is clear-cut; just as there is no one best teaching method, there is no one best medium for teaching languages. Numerous factors are responsible for this, some have to do with the learner, others with the medium, the learning material, the tutor or the social context of the learning situation. In the

following I intend to point out some of those factors.

The presence of different personality characteristics make some people more suited to one medium than to another. For example, highly anxious people may prefer to learn from a machine rather than from a tutor because they do not like to expose themselves to public scrutiny; some people feel they can retain their self-respect better when talking to a machine.

People have different mental set-ups. For instance, some people are more audio-minded, some more print-minded and some more picture-minded. Consequently, they are able to make better use of one medium in preference to another.

There are different theories about communication channelsto the brain. One theory maintains that learning is more efficient if information is presented through one channel only, either the audio or the visual channel. Others believe that information which reaches the brain via several channels (i.e. audio and visual) simultaneously makes for better and fuller learning. Bruner (1973: 26) offers a third way by saying that all different forms of sense perception act as substitutes for one another. For example, if we compare the experience of actually seeing a zebra with that of hearing the instructional statement: 'a zebra is a striped, horse-like animal', we can say that both are informationally equivalent, and they can both be mapped on to an underlying conception of zebras, horses etc. This is not to deny, however, that each mode has a residual uniqueness but merely to assert that they share a common structure as well.

Related to the previous point is the picture versus word argument. The claim that 'one picture is worth a thousand words' is only true in some cases, as, for example, in the case of the zebra. But if, on the other hand, we take the word 'mammal', one word is obviously better than a number of pictures. Generally speaking one could say with Copeland (n.d.: 10) that "high-order concepts are usually more economically and effectively communicated using text".

Claims are made throughout the literature that if we aim at attitude change and not only at teaching language as a skill, then this is more readily attained by personal contact with a tutor than through other media. Such claims are, however, not conclusive. As yet far too little is known about the influence of affective and cognitive factors on attitudes, as indeed on long-term memory. There are some individual studies which have investigated these factors. Samuels (1970: 405), for example, who investigated the effect of pictures on children learning to read, came to the conclusion that, when used as adjuncts to the printed text, pictures do not facilitate comprehension, but can influence attitudes (the context was race relations).

A decisive factor may also be the style of presentation or the production techniques of a programme. In an experiment, the BBC programme The Big Cities (from the British Social History series) was prepared in sound only as well as being shown in the original television version, in order to isolate the impact of visuals. The different versions were then presented to groups of school children. The two main conclusions to emerge were: 1) there was almost no difference in interest, strong feeling and recall between the sound-track only and the audio-visual presentations, but 2) it was clear that the 'dramatic' presentation in both versions evoked significantly greater interest, feeling and recall of programme content than a more neutral version which greatly reduced dramatic heightening (Kemelfield 1977: 17).

The social context, whether formal or informal, can also influence the learning situation. In an experiment another BBC film from the series The Swinging Sixties was shown to one group of children in a deliberately contrived 'entertainment' setting, whereas another comparable group saw it as an 'educational' film under strict school discipline. There was no evidence that the entertainment group learned or understood less than the educational group. Yet the written reports of those who viewed the programme under strict school conditions were rated as more impersonal, content-orientated and commonplace. Children who viewed in a relaxed entertainment atmosphere tended to give more personalised, critical reactions to the presentation (Kemelfield 1977: 18).

Familiarity with the medium is another factor. We learn better with and from a medium we are familiar with from home than from one we only encounter in a school context.

Age is another important factor. Our senses (hearing and seeing) generally decline with age, but the effect on learning has not been well enough researched yet. Recent studies have shown, however, that not only do adult learners differ from each other in the way they learn, but that these differences increase with age (for age we might substitute 'experience') (cf. Candy 1981: 69-70).

This catalogue could probably go on endlessly. The point I want to stress is that every learning situation is a network of interacting variables, the pattern of which is different for each individual learner. The question is to what extent should we try and tailor instruction to a variety of learner differences, and to what extent should the learners adapt themselves to the instructional programme. It is obviously a question of finding the right balance between the two. Certainly, the recent trend towards individualised instruction rests upon the assumption that individual differences are more important

than similarities. However, many studies which compare classes of students who were taught by television or by sound cassette with classes who were taught by a live teacher come to the conclusion that there are no significant differences in achievement. Comparisons of this kind, however, are of no great value, for, as Cross says,

> we find that for the mythical statistical average student it seems to make little difference how we teach. But when we look at the data student by student, it is clear that some students improve, some remain unaffected, and a few actually regress under various teaching conditions (in Candy 1981: 67).

IV. Conclusion and Outlook

If we look at the opportunities that the media and technology have provided to language instruction, I would point out three particular aspects:

1) Technology, especially the mass media, has definitely increased access to different language material for a much wider section of the population. If the present trend continues, there will be an increasing growth in leisure and free time and at the same time a growing need for educational opportunities in the context of 'lifelong learning'; and if we also take into account the general lack of access to educational resources, then the role of the media in the distribution of knowledge must be more than simply a supportive one. However, as Bates (1984: 226) points out, there is also likely to be a widening of the gap between those such as the unemployed, the disabled and the elderly with very little technological ecuipment in the home, and those earning high incomes who are likely to have a wide range of equipment at their disposal. In this respect, broadcast television, radio, books and audio cassettes are still the most suitable technologies for providing open access to learning. A 1979 survey confirms that most Open University students already own, or have access to, the technologies mentioned; it is revealing to compare the relevant figures from the survey with Bates' prognosis of access to technology in British homes in 1990:

% of students with access 1979		% of households with access 1990
97	TV and radio set	98
87	cassette recorder (audio)	90
10	cassette recorder (video)	66
	microcomputers	50

(Sharples 1982: 19) (Bates 1984: 225)

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2) The emergence of new combinations of symbol systems with the new media in fact calls for a redesigning of the content of language programmes, capitalising on the unique contribution each medium offers to the teaching of languages. Television, for example, is the only medium which can present spoken language together with its paralinguistic features and embedded in its socio-cultural context. It is, of course, possible to use television as a technology only; Bates (1984: 35), for example, when talking about the Chinese Central Television University, mentions that programmes there are mainly lectures, often lasting 50 minutes, which are written out on a blackboard, at which the camera is pointed.

3) Multi-media packages are ideally suited for self-instruction and for the individual learner who prefers to learn in a more informal context in the comfort of the home. Different combinations of media packages can accomodate individual learning preferences by making it possible to use different pathways to the brain and thus providing alternative ways to reach understanding and comprehension. Media packages, as an alternative learning system, can develop alongside the existing educational system and thus respond to a clearly existing need for a greater variety of forms of structured, self-directed learning opportunities.

There remain, however, many open questions concerning the use of media for instructional purposes. One of the greatest unknown factors is what an increase in the use of technology will do to our thinking and to our minds. The cultivation of any new skill always happens at the expense of other skills. Some people claim that our culture has cultivated the 'primacy of the eye' for too long, and that this has been achieved at the expense of other senses, or as Parker (1974:94) puts it: we are "a literate society of compulsive visualizers". The new media are definitely playing their part in shifting the balance between our senses, and, to quote Parker (1974: 91) once more, "the sensory orchestration of the young has changed, and the educational system must change to accomodate this new sensory mix".

As to language teaching in particular, which skills should we give priority to in our teaching? Language has to do with the whole complex of communication, and communication happens today probably more frequently with and through media than between people. Since all forms of communication demand the ability to decode messages, some argue that we should give priority to the necessary skills connected with decoding, i.e. listening and reading. Many educators, however, express the fear and warning that, by reinforcing the values which are

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connected with technology, such as efficiency and receptivity (which is often equated with passivity), we may be guilty of neglecting to a marked degree the other functions of education, such as those of social and interpersonal skill development. To safeguard these educational values, we must conclude that the human tutor will continue to carry out the most essential function in the field of language learning, in company with the technological media.

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BILINGUALISM AND LEXICAL INNOVATION

1. Introduction

It is generally acknowledged that bilingual children, by the very fact of having to learn two items for every lexical entity, initially tend to have a smaller vocabulary than children mastering one language from birth (Macnamara 1966). Clark (1981) posits that children tend to innovate in domains where their vocabulary is small. New words are created to express new meanings using forms that fit the word formation paradigms of the language. She contends that three principles govern the construction of new lexical forms in children:

a) Productivity - using a strategy of "look for the commonest device that expresses the desired meaning."
b) Semantic Transparency - using a strategy of "look for devices that mark only one meaning," and "look for devices that are words in their own right."
c) Regularisation - using a strategy of "use the same device everywhere to mark the same meaning."

She notes that the suffix -er marks both agent and instrument nouns in English. The use of -er would thus allow for productivity in expressing an agent, but at the cost of semantic transparency.

Clark (1981) also posits that once suffixes have been acquired productivity tends to be more important than semantic transparency, while in the cases where suffixes have not been acquired compounds are used in preference, so that semantic transparency becomes more important. Whether the three principles mentioned above obtain in innovations made by bilingual children in both languages, and whether the same strategies are used in both languages by each child, and to what extent Clark's (1981) three principles pertain to another language than English are questions addressed by the present study.

2. The Study

The subjects of the study, Cornelie and Marie-Claire, have learned Dutch and English by speaker identification (Kolers and Paradis 1980; McLaughlin 1978; Meijers 1962; Saunders 1982). The mother has always spoken Dutch, her native language, to the children, while the girl who looked after them on weekdays until they were four years old spoke English. The father, a native English speaker, alternated at first between Dutch and English, learning Dutch with the children. As they became older and started school he kept more and more to English. The children live in an English

speaking environment but spend one month each summer in Holland. Their speech is accepted by their peers in both language environments.

No records were made of the children's speech before they were 5 and 7 years respectively. Since then, for six months, weekly tapes were made at home in the living room. The children never liked being recorded while playing and have on occasion switched off the machine and once filled it with animal noises. It has been found very difficult to hide the recorder from them.

In an effort to elicit lexical innovations a list was made to elicit agent nouns, based on Clark's (1981) work on such elicitation. A list of verbs the children know and use was made up and the children were asked to supply appropriate agents. Twenty-seven Dutch verbs were selected for seventeen of which well-established agent nouns exist, while the ten remaining verbs would require innovations to express the agent. This list was then translated into English. Rather than trying to match the various morphological rules and irregularities as well as innovations expected for the Dutch verb list, which in itself would not be possible, it was considered that in using the corresponding verbs in English more interesting data on the interaction of the two languages would be found in the children's replies.

On 2 September 1984 the children were tested in Dutch in Holland, where they had been since the beginning of August. On 9 September, on their return from Holland, they were tested in English by an English native speaker. The children did not like playing this game in English so soon after their return, as they complained they had forgotten English. Although a further list was made up to elicit instrument nouns, the younger child, Cornelie, refused point blank to play this second game in English. She does not enjoy playing these games, in any language. It always takes some time to obtain her agreement to play; when she does sit down she answers as quickly as possible and always complains she is being tricked into saying things. Marie-Claire, on the other hand, likes doing the tests and is always amused at her own answers.

Before the children were given the test in English one native English speaker was tested. Since English is known to the reader, no discussion is included on expected answers to the test in English. Three Dutch native speakers were also tested in Dutch. Their answers confirmed that the answers to be expected in Dutch fall into five categories, four of which concern existing agent nouns. Firstly, in six cases the regular -er/-ster (masc./fem.) suffix to the verb stem would result in well-established agents (5, 6, 13, 16, 22 and 24). Other items are formed by other suffixes (9, 10, 14) or just the verb stem (27), while

other existing agent nouns have no morphological relation with the verb (4, 17, 19, and 25). Further nouns consist of a compound where a different verb is used (18, 20). Of the items on this list which have no obvious established agent, one could not be formed by the suffix -er, but would attach the suffix -aar to the verb stem, if not compounded (3).

3. Results and Discussion

The replies made by the bilingual children are shown in Tables 1 and 2. Although the agents expected in Dutch could be classified according to regularity of suffix and existence of well-established nouns, such a distinction is not borne out in the replies given by the children. Contrary to adult replies, the children replied with existing agent nouns known to them for numbers 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 15, 19, 24 and 25 (Marie-Claire) and numbers 2, 4, 5, 12, 19, and 21 (Cornelie). Most innovations made by Marie-Claire were acceptable morphologically; she was quite adventurous in her use of suffixes and production of compounds. Unacceptable was 23 since "kleed" is a noun and not a verb stem; it makes no sense. The suffix -aar used for 27 is morphologically correct; however, the existing agent consists of only the verb stem. Morphologically unacceptable answers were more general in English, even though, or possibly because, the formation rules for agent nouns are not as complex in English as they are in Dutch. The -er suffix was overextended by both children on three occasions in English (5, 10, and 17). It is interesting to note that Cornelie uses the English pronunciation of "student" when describing somebody who studies in Dutch, while, faced with the same question in English one week later, she innovates with -er, producing "studier".

Problems were encountered several times, especially in Dutch, in which language they were tested first. Marie-Claire could not think of an answer three times (4, 8, 16). Her strategy in these cases, when replying at all, was to reply with words which cover a very wide field, including the activity asked for. Thus, for somebody who drives a car she replies "mens" (grown-up), and for somebody who sleeps, she decided at first on "iedereen" (everybody). In the third instance she did not reply at all. Cornelie's replies in five instances are more centred on the age and sex of the agent, in that children are chosen for going to school and writing, while a woman types and a man fixes cars. Such a strategy, where none of Clark's (1981) principles really obtain and no effort is made to innovate using the question as a key, appears to be occasioned more by the children thinking of who they have seen doing this activity and what they had in common than by searching their word store.

In Dutch, Cornelie tended to use both semantic transparency and the strategy of productivity in innovating,

TABLE 1 ELICITATION OF AGENT NOUNS DUTCH

QUESTIONS	REPLIES Marie-Claire (8:6)	Cornelie (6:7)
Iemand die		
1) gras maait	tuinman	maaier
2) lacht naar alles	clown	giechelpot
3) zakken opstapelt	zakkenboer	vuilniszak-meneer
4) auto rijdt	mens	automevrouw
5) fietst	fietser	fietser
6) zwemt	zwemmer	zwemmer
7) haren wast	kapper	harenwasser
8) slaapt	iedereen/slaapkous/slaapzak	slaper
9) studeert	student	**student (Eg.)
10) telefoneert	telefoneerder	telefoon
11) sigaren rookt	sigarenroker	sigarenroker
12) ruiten ingooit	rover	rover
13) kleren naait	naaier	klerenmaker
14) naar school gaat	schoolkind	kindje
15) cadeautjes geeft	Granny/Sint	cadeautjegever
16) schrijft	-	kinderen
17) tikt	tikker	mevrouwtje
18) post brengt	postman	postmeneer
19) brood verkoopt	bakker	bakker
20) stofzuigt	zuiger	mevrouw/stofzuiger
21) baby's verzorgt	(Eg.nursery)/babyverzorger	moeder
22) schoorstenen veegt	*schoorsteenschoner	schoorsteenveger
23) kleden legt	*kleederer	kleedman
24) verhuist	verhuizer	verhuismeneer
25) auto's heelmaakt	garageman	meneertje
26) fietsen verkoopt	fietsverkoper	*verkoopfiets/fietsewinkel
27) schildert	*schilderaar/schilderman	schilderman

*morphologically unacceptable. **code switching

TABLE 2 ELICITATION OF AGENT NOUNS ENGLISH

QUESTIONS	REPLIES Marie-Claire (8:6)	Cornelie (6:7)
Somebody who ...		
1) cuts grass	grass cutter	cut the grass person
2) smiles all the time	clown	smiler/clown
3) stacks sacks	stack-sacker	sack stack
4) drives a car	driver	driver
5) cycles	cycler	cycler
6) swims	swimmer	swimmer
7) washes hair	barbers	washer
8) sleeps	sleeper	sleeper
9) studies	student	studier
10) telephones	telephoner	telephoner
11) smokes cigars	smoker	cigar *roker
12) throws in windows	robber	*rover
13) sews clothes	sewer	sewer
14) goes to school	school child	school girl or boy
15) gives presents	Sinterklaas	Granny
16) writes	writer	writer
17) types	typer	typer
18) brings post	postman	postman
19) sell bread	baker	sell breader/ *bakker/baker
20) hoovers	hoover man	hooverer
21) minds babies	babyminder/nurse	babyminder
22) cleans chimneys	chimney cleaner	*schoorsteenman
23) lays carpets	carpet layer	carpet layer
24) moves house	mover	move houser
25) fixes cars	car fixer	car maker
26) sells bikes	bike man	bike seller
27) paints	painter	painter

*code switching

making compounds with "meneertje/mevrouwtje" five times, and with "man" three times, while innovating seven times with the -er suffix in Dutch. She seems not to have appropriated any other suffixes in Dutch as yet. The principle of regularisation does not appear to obtain in her Dutch innovations. In English, however, the strategies of both productivity and regularisation were preferred in her replies, as they were in Marie-Claire's. In Dutch, on the other hand, Marie-Claire appears to have appropriated many of the suffixes used to indicate agent nouns.

It seems that the principle of regularisation does not obtain in Dutch so far as the replies of these two children to twenty-seven questions are concerned. Cornelie divided her replies almost equally between the principles of productivity and semantic transparency when her innovations are considered, while Marie-Claire appears to have outgrown the need for regularisation in Dutch. What is interesting is that both children appear to be at a different stage of appropriation in each language: Marie-Claire appears to have appropriated the intricacies of Dutch formation rules to a greater extent than those of English, where -er is relied on heavily; Cornelie, as mentioned above, also relies heavily on the suffix -er in English but not in Dutch, where compounds and suffix are used equally in innovations. It should be noted, however, that the suffix -er is much more productive in English in the formation of agent nouns than it is in Dutch, where other suffixes are often required.

Mistakes in compounding nouns and nominals containing a verb base by inverting the elements occurred a few times. Marie-Claire inverted the elements only once, in English (3), while Cornelie inverted the elements twice in English (19 and 24), and once in Dutch (26). Possibly the fact that object and verb are inverted in the Dutch questions impeded more mistakes of this kind in Dutch.

Interference between the two languages seems to occur once, covering two items, in the case of Marie-Claire in the Dutch test. She could not think of a reply to 21, and said, after a pause, "in 't Engels heb je nursery" (in English you have nursery), and then found the Dutch word. Possibly this interference was triggered by the use of the word "baby" in the question, which is the same in Dutch as in English. In her reply to 22, Marie-Claire uses a compound not possible in Dutch, since "schoon" is an adjective or adverb and can not be used as a verb stem. It may be that her answer to 22 is a further instance of interference and should be interpreted as a literal translation of the English compound chimney-cleaner, where "clean" is an adjective to her mind.

No code-switching occurred in her case, clown being an accepted word in Dutch, Granny being the name used for the Irish grandmother, while Sinterklaas is the person who

brings presents in December rather than Santa Claus. Cornelie, however, switches codes, once using an English word in the Dutch test by pronouncing "student" in English, and four times using Dutch words in the English test (11, 12, 19 and 22). She did not correct herself on any of these occasions, and appeared to be unaware of it.

As mentioned above, the children have different attitudes to word games: Marie-Claire enjoys them and answers slowly, while Cornelie does not like them and answers very quickly - you could almost say, without thinking. A difference in manner of replying with regard to the Dutch adults was also found. Although there were no objections to participating in the tests, one of the Dutch speakers was very adventurous and innovated freely and quickly, while another took her time and searched for existing agents to cover the activity. It would seem that this difference in manner of replying reflects a variation in the mode of response of individuals: a reflective mode and a spontaneous mode. In the reflective mode the answer is given after reflection and seems to be based more on the meaning of the question than on its form; in the spontaneous mode, the first word that comes to mind is given in answer and the form of the question is used as a key rather than its meaning, resulting in a wealth of innovations. Possibly these two modes are two extremes between which there are many gradations. To what extent the mode of response is related to personality or other such factors cannot be accurately determined with this very small sample. It does indicate, however, that response in an elicitation task such as the one described here can only reflect the state of language of a child at the moment it is tested. If tested at another time when a different mode of response is used, the replies may well be different.

4. Conclusion

To what extent did these children follow Clark's (1981) principles of construction of new lexical forms in this small elicitation task? It appears that both children used the principles of productivity and regularisation in their English innovations. When their Dutch innovations are considered, however, the principle of regularisation is not evident in the responses of these children. Cornelie divides her innovations equally between semantic transparency and productivity - although she does use only one suffix in productivity and so is consistent there. Marie-Claire appears to have outgrown Clark's (1981) regularisation principle, which, after all, was based on children below six years of age. Since the suffix -er is much more productive in English than it is in Dutch, it is possible that Clark's three principles do not obtain in the same way in other languages as they do in English. Testing with monolingual

children would give some insight into the strategies used.

Very little interference was found in this elicitation test where more was expected for the following reasons. Firstly, the agents sought were the same in both languages; secondly, there was only one week's interval between the tests; and thirdly, the children did the test in English one day after returning from a month's stay in a Dutch speaking environment. Interference only occurred in the case of Marie-Claire, the elder child, whereas code switching was done only by Cornelie, and then much more in English than in Dutch. The lack of more extensive interference points to the possibility that two separate language systems exist in these children.

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LEARNING GERMAN WITHOUT A TEACHER: A SELF-INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF ENGINEERING SCIENCE

0 INTRODUCTION

This paper reports on a pilot scheme that provided a two-year self-instructional programme in German for volunteer undergraduate students of Engineering Science at Trinity College, Dublin. The scheme was undertaken as part of a larger project in self-instructional language learning. Our paper falls into four sections: an outline of the aims, design and organization of the scheme; a summary of student participation in the scheme; a brief account of our experience of student counselling; and a description of the assessment instruments administered at the end of the scheme. Constraints of time dictate that our account cannot be more than summary; a full report on the scheme will be published in due course as a CLCS Occasional Paper.

1 AIMS, DESIGN AND ORGANIZATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The first phase of our research project on self-instructional language learning used a questionnaire to elicit information about students' past experience of language learning, their attitudes to the learning task, and their estimate of their need to learn second languages in the future (Little et al. 1984). The questionnaire data on preferred approaches to language learning indicated that many potential learners would resist a self-instructional approach that was wholly independent of teacher and class. Thus in the final phase of the project we wanted to devise a self-instructional programme that would enable us to test the effectiveness of a support structure built around learner counselling. Our need for learners to participate in this programme coincided with a desire on the part of the Faculty of Engineering and Systems Sciences to introduce an optional course in German for their students. For some years the Faculty had provided an optional two-year course in French leading to a certificate of proficiency. The French course was (and is) taught and examined on conventional lines. The Centre for Language and Communication Studies (CLCS) offered to provide a programme in German on condition that it could be self-instructional and experimental and that a certificate of proficiency could be awarded to successful learners. This offer was accepted.

Our questionnaire data suggested that although some of our learners might already know some German, few of them were likely to have been taught with a strong bias towards using the language as a medium of everyday communication. At the same time we knew

from informal contacts with students that many of them sought vacation jobs and placements in Germany and were thus likely to give a high priority to developing oral/aural skills in German. Moreover, since at least some of our learners were likely to be beginners, it seemed inappropriate to give the programme an exclusively "language for special purposes" focus from the outset. These considerations helped to determine our choice of the BBC GERMAN KIT as the core learning resource for the programme. The KIT recommended itself for three reasons. First, it is specifically designed for self-instruction, contains a powerful hidden teacher, and provides for regular self-evaluation. Secondly, it is based on the authentic and semi-authentic recordings made for the BBC German course KONTAKTE and contains a wealth of linguistic and non-linguistic information of the kind needed by a foreigner living in Germany. Thirdly, it makes extensive use of audio recordings, which means that it is well suited to "library mode" use in a language laboratory.

In addition to the BBC GERMAN KIT we were able to offer learners a wide range of supplementary learning materials, especially recorded materials. We hoped that as they progressed through the KIT, whether as beginners or in order to give a communicative edge to the German they already knew, they would reach a clearer understanding of the personal need they were fulfilling by learning German and would achieve autonomy by assuming full responsibility for their learning. It was fundamental to the programme that it should permit a high degree of individualization as learners developed their own interests, some of which might be related to their academic/vocational concerns.

As we have already explained, our central purpose in devising the scheme was to experiment with learner counselling. We intended that the counselling service should provide learners with both therapeutic and pedagogic support. Learning a second/foreign language self-instructionally is likely to prove psychologically difficult for many learners: past experience of language learning may impede their present efforts; they may have difficulty in organizing an appropriate pattern of learning; and the slightest loss of motivation may have disastrous consequences for the whole learning enterprise. We conceived the counsellor's therapeutic task as being to bring the learner to a clearer (in some cases a new) understanding of his problems and to help him decide on appropriate solutions to them. At the same time the counsellor had the essentially pedagogic function of providing learning materials appropriate to the learner's increasingly individual needs. The counsellor (Aedamar Grant) was also responsible for the day-to-day running of the scheme and for keeping detailed records of rates of participation and counselling sessions.

At the beginning of Michaelmas term 1982 we posted a notice in the School of Engineering inviting all second-year students who were interested in learning German by self-instruction to attend a general introductory meeting. At this meeting we described the BBC GERMAN KIT, outlined the difficulties we expected

self-instructional learners to encounter, and explained what the counselling service was intended to achieve in terms of (i) helping learners and (ii) research. We also arranged an initial interview with all students interested in participating in the programme. The purpose of the interview was twofold: to elicit information about students' past language learning experience and present aspirations, and to give them an opportunity to seek further information about the scheme. Students were then free to use the BBC GERMAN KIT in the language laboratory as often as they wished (the laboratory is open Mondays to Fridays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.). They could arrange to see the counsellor by signing an appointments sheet in the CLCS office.

At the beginning of Hilary term 1983 all students who had participated in the scheme in the previous term were invited to attend a second interview. Again the purpose of the interview was twofold: to gather data on learners' responses to the scheme so far and to provide further information on the intended nature of the counselling service, which we suspected few of them had fully understood.

During the remainder of the scheme we had two meetings with participants to negotiate the form, content and timing of terminal assessment. Also, as a result of requests made at individual counselling sessions, the counsellor arranged a number of meetings between learners and native speakers of German (there were separate meetings for beginners and intermediate learners). These meetings combined unstructured discussion with role play activities and language games that the counsellor worked out with the native speakers in advance. They gave learners an opportunity to discover how successful their learning had been and came to play a central role in the learning process. For the rest, learners were on their own apart from whatever contact they sought with each other or with the counsellor.

2 RATES OF PARTICIPATION

In principle our programme was available to about 150 students who were starting the second year of their four-year course in Engineering Science. Greatly to our surprise the introductory meeting in Michaelmas term 1982 was attended by rather more than half of these, though it was immediately clear that some had been drawn to the meeting less by any great interest in language learning than by the entertainment they expected from our attempts to expound the novel concept of self-instructional learning. Nevertheless, 63 students visited the language laboratory and used the BBC GERMAN KIT at least once in the first term of the programme, and 49 of them attended the initial interview with the counsellor. By the end of the Christmas vacation 36 students were still participating in the programme, and 24 of them attended the second interview with the counsellor in Hilary term 1983. However, as the annual Engineering examinations approached the number of participants

dropped to 18. At the beginning of Michaelmas term 1983 15 students were still visiting the language laboratory and/or making use of the counselling service. Four of these students abandoned the programme by the beginning of Hilary term 1984, and two more dropped out in the course of that term. The remaining 9 students all presented themselves for assessment in Trinity term 1984.

We find these participation rates highly encouraging. After all, the programme was optional; for most participants it involved a new approach to learning; and the course in Engineering Science has a very full timetable, what with lectures, seminars and practicals, so that it was not easy for participants to make time for regular learning. Perspective on our participation rates is provided by those for the French course offered to students of Engineering. Because it is class-based the French course is limited to 24 students each year; in most years about half of these complete the course and present themselves for assessment. (Many more students have learned French at school than have learned German.)

3 THE EXPERIENCE OF COUNSELLING

At the beginning of the scheme we exepected that learners might have some difficulty in coming to terms with the idea of counselling, despite our efforts at the introductory meeting and first interviews to explain clearly what was intended. Second interviews showed that after three months of learning most participants regarded the counselling service as a last resort, only to be turned to when the learner could progress no further on his own. Participants were often shy about coming for counselling and sometimes apologized that their problems or requests were not sufficiently important to merit a counselling session. It was clear that the majority of them were not sure what to expect from a counselling session and uncertain of the correct behaviour to adopt towards the counsellor. Many found it difficult to talk about their learning process openly, perhaps for the very good reason that they had no previous experience of doing so.

Clearly the counsellor's first task in counselling was to create an atmosphere in which learners felt at ease. With some learners it was possible to develop a good working relationship in a relatively short time and discussion of their needs could begin almost at once. With other learners it was necessary to spend some time chatting about general topics of interest (Engineering studies, hobbies, holidays). Often details which emerged from these casual conversations were a useful indirect guide to learners' needs and provided a starting-point for subsequent sessions. The counsellor normally allowed learners up to ten minutes in which to introduce the topic of their language learning. If they had not done so after this time she would herself bring it into the conversation as tactfully as possible.

During the first year of the programme eight participants made a total of twenty visits to the counsellor. Seven of these participants had attended both first and second interviews; the eighth had begun working with the BBC GERMAN KIT without first contacting the counsellor, but at the time of second interviews he turned to her for advice on supplementary learning materials. All but one of these students had learned German previously; five of them were among the nine participants who presented themselves for assessment at the end of the programme. The majority of counselling visits in the first year of the programme took place in Hilary term.

In the second year of the programme thirteen participants made a total of 48 visits to the counsellor. Six of these thirteen participants had attended for counselling in the first year of the scheme. Three had not attended for counselling in the first year of the programme but had attended the language laboratory regularly; they visited the counsellor in Michaelmas term of the second year to discuss their learning in relation to the assessment at the end of the year. They were satisfied both with the BBC GERMAN KIT and with their progress but sought reassurance that the pattern of learning they had developed would prepare them adequately for assessment. Once this reassurance had been given they sought no further help from the counsellor. By far the greatest use of the counselling service in the second year was made, predictably, by participants who presented themselves for assessment at the end of the programme.

As we explained earlier, our conception of learner counselling embraced both therapeutic and pedagogic functions. In many cases the two functions were inseparable. This was especially the case early in the programme, when the majority of participants who came to the counsellor expressed their difficulties in terms of learning resources but in doing so revealed learning problems of which they were almost certainly unaware. However, as the programme progressed, individual learners came to require predominantly therapeutic or predominantly pedagogic counselling. In other words, some learners had continuing problems in defining their needs, maintaining interest and motivation, finding an appropriate pattern of learning, and so on; while others developed a satisfactory learning pattern and used the counselling service as a source of supplementary learning materials and a means of monitoring their progress. These two tendencies in our counselling experience can be illustrated by two brief case studies.

During the second term of the programme one of the participants who had taken Leaving Certificate German visited the counsellor in order to express doubts about both the suitability of the BBC GERMAN KIT to his needs and his own ability to adapt to self-instructional learning. He had joined the programme because he hoped to work in Germany when he had completed his Engineering studies.

The chief source of this participant's difficulties seemed

to be his beliefs about both his own ability and the language learning process. Although he expressed great enthusiasm for language learning, he confessed that he had found it a boring process at school, where he had not been a particularly successful language learner. He believed that he was good at picking up languages in a natural setting, but doubted his capacity to organize a self-instructional learning programme and develop a pattern of regular learning. It became clear to the counsellor that he was setting himself unrealistic goals and became despondent when he failed to attain them with a minimum of effort. The negative image that he had formed of himself as a language learner constantly impeded his attempts to learn. He used evaluative adjectives like "wrong" and "hopeless" to describe his learning experiences and the language he produced. In discussion with the counsellor it emerged that these labels derived from the criteria which had been used to evaluate pupils' performance in his German classroom. For example, he performed "badly" in his (or his former German teacher's) terms if he failed to produce a complete sentence in response to a question, even though in most cases a native speaker would respond with no more than a word or a phrase.

During his first counselling session he admitted that he found the oral/aural dimension of the BBC GERMAN KIT off-putting as his previous learning experience had been almost exclusively focussed on written forms of the language. From the beginning of the programme he found that he had considerable problems with the pronunciation of German, and he attempted to overcome this by constantly repeating and memorizing phrases and sentences from the early units of the KIT. Thus he spent a lot of time and energy learning by heart material which was already familiar to him and which was far too simple to be of enduring interest. At school learning by heart had proved an effective means of obtaining satisfactory marks, but in the context of self-instructional learning it produced boredom and a sense of failure.

The counsellor attempted to help this participant to clarify his attitudes and needs by analysing his image of himself as a language learner and his beliefs about the language learning process. At the same time, in order to show him that the learning task was not as hopeless as he supposed, she prepared a unit of the KIT with him, discussing its objectives and linguistic content. She then asked him to work through the unit listing all the difficulties he encountered. Greatly to the participant's surprise it turned out that his difficulties focussed mainly on pronunciation and relatively minor grammatical details. The counsellor encouraged him to proceed by setting himself attainable short-term objectives and to make as much use as possible of the "Check Your Progress" units in the KIT. She also helped him to design checklists by which to measure his progress.

Gradually his confidence in his language learning ability and thus his image of himself as a language learner improved, and he began to develop a learning pace suited to his particular needs and style. But he needed the constant reassurance that the

counsellor was available to provide support and offer advice on his learning. Sometimes he reverted to his old technique of learning by heart anything that he could not grasp fully, and this led to despondency, which in turn made him abandon his learning for a week or two. He would then use the counsellor to help him re-establish a learning routine. In the second year of his learning he decided after some hesitation to attend a native speaker meeting. To his surprise he found not only that he could understand much of what was said but that he could actually make himself understood in German. This was a valuable source of motivation. Also in the second year of his learning he developed an interest in technical German. He tried to work with texts provided by the counsellor, but eventually decided to concentrate his efforts on completing the KIT. It is certain that without the support of the counsellor he would not have completed the two-year programme.

Our second case study presents an extreme contrast with the first. It concerns the one participant in the programme whose previous knowledge of German had been gained by self-instruction. This learner (already referred to above) did not come for first interview as he intended to use CLCS's self-instructional learning resources without participating formally in the programme for students of Engineering. However, by about the middle of Hilary term in the first year of the programme he had worked through the BBC GERMAN KIT, and he then turned to the counsellor for advice on follow-up learning materials. Having discussed with her the design and purpose of the programme for Engineering students and the nature of the counselling service, he decided that his own learning objectives might best be achieved within the framework of the programme.

From the first this participant impressed the counsellor as a very capable and efficient learner who was well able to direct and organize his own learning. No doubt his previous experience of self-instructional learning had helped him to achieve the impressive degree of autonomy he already possessed. To begin with, his primary aim in learning German was for purposes of everyday communication; yet because he was a shy person he found it difficult to establish contact with native speakers or other learners in order to practise his German. At first he was hesitant about attending native speaker meetings, but eventually he participated actively and benefited greatly from them.

By the middle of the first year of the programme he decided that he wanted to specialize in the processing of technical texts in German. After experimenting with various resources, he decided to concentrate on a self-instructional course based on texts dealing with different aspects of the science of materials (NTF. HINFUEHRUNG ZUR NATURWISSENSCHAFTLICH-TECHNISCHEN FACHSPRACHE. TEIL 1: WERKSTOFFKUNDE). At the same time he was pursuing an interest in various aspects of German literature and exploring techniques for coming to terms with complex literary texts. However, in the second year of the programme he concentrated exclusively on the science of materials and developed a

regular pattern of work and counselling. He would prepare a unit of the course over a period of two or three weeks, then come and discuss his work with the counsellor. The technical knowledge that he derived from his Engineering studies enabled him to use the charts and diagrams in the book as a means of gaining access to the German text. But as the text was often highly complex he inevitably encountered linguistic difficulties that he could not solve on his own and so turned to the counsellor for help with them. Since the counsellor had no technical expertise, she could rarely resolve his difficulties without further ado. Instead she and the learner had to approach the meaning of the text collaboratively from their respective positions of linguistic and technical expertise. This procedure worked very successfully and was not notably impeded by the learner's insistence that as far as possible counselling sessions should be conducted through the medium of German. The procedure was particularly valuable in helping to deepen the counsellor's perception of her role, bringing her to a realization that at certain stages in the counselling process it was not merely possible but imperative for the learner rather than the counsellor to assume the role of expert.

Our experience of counselling during the two years of the programme confirmed that therapeutic counselling is essential for some learners if they are to complete their course of learning; but it also taught us that learners who quickly achieve autonomy are likely to seek counselling of a largely pedagogic character. The two kinds of counselling demanded considerable flexibility on the part of the counsellor. It should be noted that the most successful learner to take the programme was the one participant who had previously learned some German by self-instruction; whereas the two learners who required the most intensive therapeutic counselling had both taken German at Leaving Certificate and evinced problems that derived at least partly from the approach of their former German teacher.

4 ASSESSMENT

As we have seen, the students participating in the programme fell into two categories: beginners and those who already knew some German. We thus decided to offer assessment at two levels, which we described as beginners' and intermediate. Because the BBC GERMAN KIT had been the basic learning resource for the programme, we further decided that compulsory assessment should be based on the communicative range (though not necessarily limited to the linguistic content) of Units 1-15 of the KIT for the beginners' level and of Units 1-25 (the whole KIT) for the intermediate level. At each level the instruments of compulsory assessment were an oral test lasting 10-15 minutes and a pencil-and-paper test lasting an hour and a half. It was for each student to decide the level at which he should be assessed. Participants in the programme also had the option of requesting assessment on any skills they had developed in German in addition to what would be tested in the compulsory assessment. This

optional assessment involved a second pencil-and-paper test lasting an hour.

The oral component of compulsory assessment at both levels consisted of four simulations, in two of which the candidate responded to an enquiry and in two of which he had to initiate the exchange. At beginners' level the response to another's enquiry involved giving directions based on a map, street plan, etc. and giving information from a railway, bus or plane timetable; at intermediate level the range was increased to include giving information about what is on in the cinema, theatre, etc. and giving information about oneself. At beginners' level the candidate had to take the initiative in two of the following transactions: shopping for food; doing business in the post office; ordering a meal in a restaurant; asking for information at the railway station; booking a room in a hotel; booking train or theatre tickets in advance. At intermediate level this list was extended to include: shopping for clothes; making an appointment with the doctor or dentist; asking for help in finding something you have lost. For each transaction we prepared an outline script which determined the goal of the transaction and the simplest path by which it could be attained. Immediately before he was tested each candidate was given ten minutes to study his four outlines together with appropriate documents (maps, timetables, the entertainments page of a German newspaper, or whatever). The test was conducted by two examiners, one of whom interacted with the student while the other listened. The criteria for evaluating each transaction were (i) did the candidate perform the transaction successfully? and (ii) if so, how many and what kind of difficulties did he encounter. We distinguished three grades of pass: A (very good), B (good) and C (adequate). We automatically gave a fail mark for any transaction which broke down before the candidate had achieved the goal of the transaction. Recordings were made of all candidates so that we could check our on-the-spot evaluations; in no case did we find it necessary to revise our marks.

For the pencil-and-paper component of compulsory assessment at each level we devised a test containing twelve questions which tried to be interactive in a variety of ways. Half the questions emphasized comprehension (for example, requiring candidates to fill in a grid summarizing the main facilities offered by three different hotels), and half required some form of production (for example, filling in the missing half of a transaction). At both levels half the questions were based on authentic or semi-authentic audio recordings. For this reason the test was administered in the language laboratory. Each candidate was given a cassette containing the six audio recordings and was free to use it in whatever way he liked. In evaluating candidates' performances we used the same two basic criteria and the same grading system as for the oral test. Since the pencil-and-paper test was strongly biased towards oral communication, we did not penalize candidates for spelling mistakes provided that their orthography was phonologically approximate.

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Of the nine learners presenting themselves for assessment at the end of the programme, five opted to be assessed at beginners' level and four opted to be assessed at intermediate level. With one exception their choice of assessment level reflected whether or not they had known any German at the beginning of the programme: one student who had learned German previously chose to be assessed as a beginner. All nine learners passed the compulsory assessment, one beginner by the skin of his teeth. The grades awarded at beginners' level were: A-, B+, B-, C+, C-; and at intermediate level: A, B+, B-, C.

Five learners requested additional assessment in areas of special interest. One beginner asked to be assessed on his comprehension of simple magazine articles of the kind found in SCALA JUGENDMAGAZIN; he performed this activity very well and was given A-. One beginner and two intermediate learners asked to be assessed on their comprehension of semi-technical journalism of the kind found in DIE UMSCHAU and BILD DER WISSENSCHAFT; they performed adequately and were given the grades C+, C and C- respectively. Finally, one intermediate learner (the subject of our second case study) asked to be assessed on the comprehension and manipulation of technical texts in German; he performed at a level that would put many honours students of German to shame and was awarded grade A.

5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion we want to make three brief points. First, we are encouraged that as many as nine participants survived to the end of the programme and performed at least adequately in the terminal assessment (their sense that they were likely to perform adequately was probably an important factor determining their survival). Secondly, there is no doubt that our programme responded to the individual needs, interests, levels and learning styles of the participants in a way that would not be possible in a class-based course. This reinforces our belief that appropriately supported self-instruction is the best way for many adults to learn the foreign languages they need. Thirdly, our experience of counselling suggests that even with a small group of learners a counselling structure needs to cover a wide range of therapeutic and pedagogic functions. But our experience also shows that, given appropriate learning materials, some learners (most of our beginners, who did not venture beyond the BBC GERMAN KIT) are able to achieve functional competence in a foreign language with scarcely any support at all.

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MOTIVATION AND PERSEVERANCE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Motivation is often said to be crucial for learning to take place, and Corder's statement that

> ... given motivation, it is inevitable that a human being will learn a second language if he is exposed to the language data (Corder 1967: 146)

is now nearly a classic. However, very little is said about it in terms of content for teaching and/or learning materials. Usually researchers suggest, and teachers use methods and approaches that would serve as motivational factors. Such is the practice in current LT and more specifically in those approaches and activities with a communicative flavour. Extracts 1 and 2 below illustrate the point.

> Extract 1
> One of our aims when we thought of this exercise was to motivate students by giving them a real purpose and, therefore, a reason for using their reading and speaking abilities (Serrao, Occhipinti, and Villone 1982: 12).

Motivation here is seen as a consequence of purpose and perceived reasons for doing things, that is, in the context of the article: for using reading and speaking abilities. The exercise is the means of motivation, beside the other aims for which it has been designed, and is characterized by the information transfer or the use of an information gap. Thus it is the design of the exercise which is meant to motivate the learner, not its content. In this sense, motivation is a function of the activity in the classroom, not of the content proper, and this is a common feature, (among others) of communicative teaching as is clear from 'Extract 2'.

> Extract 2
> Motivation ... Our aim would be to create a need for the student to learn English ... If he has nothing to say then we must give him something to say. This is often a matter of giving the student and the language something to do. If the language in the text is presented in such a way that it does not do anything, does not communicate, then we make it do something. To do something

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> with language can be defined as ... (a) saying something which is not obvious to the listener (b) saying something which the listener will respond to perhaps by performing an action, reacting emotionally, replying.
>
> Thus language is used to exchange information, attitudes and feelings ... (Prodromou 1981: 3-4).

This Extract, like the preceding one, reflects the main line of communicative approaches to LT as it focuses on the interactional aspect of language and on the use of language to learn how to use the language which is being learned. Its concept of motivation is mainly concerned with providing the learner with some need to learn the language through activities and 'communicative exercises', i.e. the type of exercises described above involving information transfer or an information gap. Motivation is thus seen as an effect of learning activities and exercises.

Thus the tendency in the present current of LT is to subordinate motivation to activities and exercises as Robinson (1980: 26-31) shows in her discussion of student motivation and the analysis of needs. This tendency is, in my opinion, analogous to the practice whereby teachers develop the pupils' grammatical or linguistic competence and expect communicative competence to follow or result from it. Rather than subordinating motivation to activity and exercise, I would suggest that the normal process is subordinating activity and exercises to motivation. In other words, activity and exercises should follow from consideration of the learner's motivation, and should make the learner want to learn. That is to say that learning activities and exercises ought to be based on the learner's motivation and should, subsequently, motivate the learner to learn. This can be schematically shown as follows:

MOTIVATION ⟷ ACTIVITY/EXERCISE

(Fig 1: Motivation and Activity/Exercise Relationship)

This representation indicates that there is a mutual relationship or interaction between 'motivation' and the activities and exercises based on it. Current LT approaches seem to favour and overemphasize the relationship 'Activity/Exercise - Motivation' (i.e. motivation as a by-product of methodology and textbook structure) and ipso-facto overlook the 'Motivation-Activity/Exercise' relationship (i.e. the direct impact/influence of motivation on learning materials).

The point that there is an inter-relationship between motivation and activity, exercises, etc. is supported by a number of writers among whom is Pattison (1976) when he writes:

> People begin learning a language with various kinds and strengths of motivation. What they do in order to learn sustains, increases, or decreases that original motivation. (Pattison 1976: 290)

Beside supporting the opinion that there is an inter-relationship between motivation and learning activities, exercises, etc, this passage suggests that motivation is a process of some kind, and that the author is, like most teachers (if not all), aware of the role of perseverance and motivation in the learning process.

Pattison (1976) suggests that the two driving elements for motivation (understood as a dynamic self-regulating process) are 'Interest' and 'Confidence about being on the right route' (Pattison 1976: 290). Without them, he says, 'the best-laid plans for learning will not get very far' (Pattison 1976: 290). The implication is that a course which does not appeal to the learner's interest and does not make him feel at home with the new language will most probably be a failure, and that the dynamism of motivation is secured only by the learner's interest and confidence.

If we take this view, then there is a case for thinking that motivation or at least aspects of it, such as 'interest' and 'confidence', should figure in the content of language learning syllabuses and course-books. The difficulty however is that interest and confidence are of different natures and that the relationship of each to motivation is different. For example, 'Interest' precedes actual motivation and receives feedback from it - whereas 'confidence' is the result of previous learning and therefore subsequent to some previous motivation. In other words, 'Interest' leads to motivation and is affected by the result of motivation, whereas 'confidence' is generated by the result of motivation and leads back to motivation. One way of getting these elements into the course is envisaged through activities which make the learner think, as thinking, it is assumed, leads the learner to be 'more active, more involved in what is going on, ... to be interested' (Pattison 1976: 291). But such a suggestion takes us back to the situation where motivation is a function of something else, namely: activity and exercises, rather than the reverse.

In addition, if we take Peters's view that motivation is goal-oriented (Peters 1958) and the view that teaching

or learning materials have to have a goal or goals which are meaningful or valuable to the learner for him to achieve, to get him to want to learn, we then are faced with the problem of the learner's sociocultural background and experience involving us in problems of psycholinguistic, social psychological, and socioling-uistic order or dimensions, and calling for an approach to deal with it. This paper suggests the $(SP)^2$, i.e. 'Specific Purposes' (SP_1), 'Social Psychological (SP_2), Approach to meet the problem.

The $(SP)^2$ Approach

This is an approach suggested to account for the Learner's motivation in Language syllabuses and course-books (Lubasa 1985). It is described as a Specific Purpose (SP_1) and Social Psychological (SP_2) approach and aims at exploiting the purposes for which learners learn languages other than their own and the idea they have of learning in their own society or the way they cognitively represent their

> Social and psychological characteristics and subjectively define the situation in terms of its norms and their goals as is any objective classification of that situation imposed from without ... (Giles 1982: viii).

In this sense the $(SP)^2$ Approach is the approach whereby aspects of motivation can be incorporated into a Language syllabus and in learning materials in terms of socio-cultural, psychological and linguistic content, and thus strike some balance between what has been referred to as the direct impact/influence of motivation (the 'Motivation-Activity/Exercise' relationship) and motivation as a by-product of methodology and textbook structure. In this context SP_1 (Specific Purposes) or LSP (Language for Specific Purposes) is seen as an approach not only in terms of 'process-orientation' but also in terms of the learner's learning-habit as a base and orientation of the approach. LSP then seen as an approach is not only process-oriented but also 'learners' learning-habit' based and oriented. In this sense LSP or ESP, with reference to English, is educational in nature and skill-oriented in scope, that is: both educational and training-oriented, and minimizes the 'Education-Training' (Widdowson 1983) and 'Specific-General' (Munby 1978) dichotomies.

By 'learners' learning-habit based and oriented' is meant that the teaching approaches (as opposed to learning approaches) and the learning materials in which they appear should ultimately be based on the idea the learner has of learning in his own environment (the

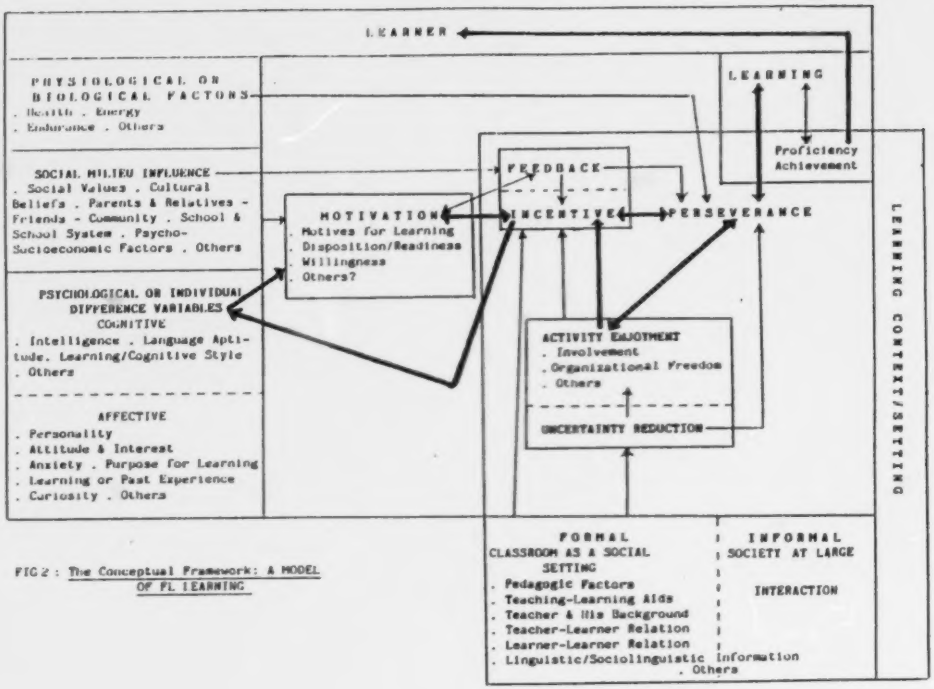

FIG 2 : The Conceptual Framework: A MODEL OF FL LEARNING

learner's concept of learning, that is) and should aim to meet that concept as it is reflected in his society or learning situation and context, thus entailing SP_2. The (SP)^2 Approach thus aims, as suggested above, to exploit the learner's 'cognitive representations' and the meaning that objectives and goals take for the learner to help him meet the purposes for which he learns a language or languages other than his own, by complying with the learner's concept of learning and 'socially constructed significance/cultural value of (the) formal system' (Brumfit 1983: 68) and moving on from there to the target-language use. It is thus intended to help the syllabus or coursebook designer to accommodate the learner's freedom of choice while exploiting his motivation and perseverance in what Brumfit (1983: 187-92) describes as a product-based syllabus. A course designed through such an approach will fit (a) the learner's cultural background, (b) the objectives and aspirations of society, and (c) the learner's cognitive and affective characteristics, all of which affect (directly or indirectly) the motivation to learn as Fig. 2 suggests. The latter is in effect a conceptual framework used to test a certain number of hypotheses among which is the generally accepted idea that,

> ... given motivation, it is inevitable that a human being will learn a second language if he is exposed to the language data. (Corder 1967/74)

That motivation is crucial for learning to occur is undeniable. But motivation needs the support of perseverance if it is to have any positive learning effect. This point gives way to hypotheses like:

> Perseverance is equally important, if not more so, than motivation in both formal and informal contexts of language acquisition.

That is the view taken in this paper and discussed below.

Description of the Conceptual Framework

Discussion of the opinion that perseverance is equally important as motivation in both formal and informal contexts of language acquisition is perhaps best done through the description of the framework which in effect stands for a model of 'Other-language' Learning and/or acquisition, based on the work of Gardner (1979, 1981, 1982), McDonough's study of 'motivation' in connection with language teaching (McDonough 1981), and Pattison's article (Pattison 1976). It shows the interaction of the learner and his background with the learning context or setting, in the process of learning. What is exclusively internal to the learner is shown

in the part labelled 'LEARNER', and what is external is in the one labelled 'LEARNING CONTEXT/SETTING'. The overlapping area contains what is assumed to be both internal (or belonging to the learner) and external to the learner, i.e. belonging to the learning context/ setting.

The framework as a model views the learner of other languages as a whole, that is, in all different aspects of his life (as a biological and psychological entity and as a social or societal and classroom member, exposed to a fair amount of the target language). The different aspects of his life influence him in many different ways, and he reacts or responds to them in a variety of different ways. His motivation is seen as the effect of the many ways he reacts or responds to the different aspects of his life and results in positive or negative incentives which in turn appeal to the learner's affective and cognitive characteristics. The complete cycle made up of the learner's 'Psychological variables', 'Motivation' and 'Incentive' constitute a feedback loop system regarded as the dynamics of motivated behaviour.

Incentive here is seen as the realisation of motivation and the generative force of continuous and/or increasing motivation and perseverance. It is indeed a 'generative force' because incentive is, by definition, 'a cause which incites and encourages action or activity ...' (Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms, 1968: 549).

Another effect of motivation is feedback to behaviour or knowledge which ultimately affects the nature of the incentive (positive or negative). Both 'feedback' and 'incentive' are directly influenced or affected by the social milieu and/or by the learner as a member of society and of a particular speech community, as well as being affected by the learner's motivation which itself is an effect (in part) of the social milieu and/or the learner as a member of society. In part, because motivation is mainly the effect of the learner's psychological characteristics seen as the necessary condition for motivation to occur.

Feedback and Incentive receive their input from the classroom and the result of classroom interaction in the formal learning situation, and, in the informal context, from society at large and the result of interpersonal interaction. These are 'Activity Enjoyment' and 'Uncertainty Reduction'. These variables can be defined in social as well as psychological terms as they are in the overlapping zone of the model. 'Activity Enjoyment' for instance can be defined in social terms as the pleasure of being a member of a group (the class) and the satisfaction resulting from the interaction

of the group (the classroom interaction, that is). In psychological terms, 'Activity Enjoyment' is the pleasure of struggling with a task or problem and the satisfaction resulting from solving it.

'Activity Enjoyment' like the 'Uncertainty Reduction' variable, has an impact on perseverance, but unlike it, is sustained and perhaps enhanced by 'Perseverance' which also is affected by the 'Incentive'. The cycle 'Activity Enjoyment - Incentive - Perseverance - Activity Enjoyment' is our second feedback loop system, and is regarded as the dynamics of perseverance. If the Incentive is strong or positive, motivation is sustained and perseverance is likely to follow. If the Incentive is negative or low, then motivation decreases and perseverance goes missing. It is in this sense that 'Incentive' is regarded as the generative force of continuous and/or increasing motivation and perseverance. And this is consistent with the everyday use of the concept as defined in dictionaries. The Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms referred to above defines the concept as applying

> ... chiefly to a cause which incites and encourages action or activity and especially to one for which the person affected is not himself responsible or which does not originate within himself. (Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms 1968: 549)

In the model the external factors for the incentive are constituted by the classroom component (formal), or society at large (informal) and the resultants: 'Activity Enjoyment' and 'Uncertainty Reduction'.

The model also shows that 'perseverance' is not only dependent upon 'Activity Enjoyment' and strong or positive incentive (the elements of the dynamics of Perseverance), but also on physiological factors such as health, energy, endurance, etc, on 'Uncertainty Reduction' and 'Feedback'.

Learning here is seen as a mainly cognitive process handled by the learner himself which brings him to understand language (use and usage) principles and 'to an ability to act upon them' (Widdowson 1983: 18). Proficiency Achievement is one of its external observable effects or components. In this sense learning is conditioned by a certain amount of perseverance, understood as the learner's ability to deal with a crisis point. Thus defined, perseverance is not only a permanent, continuous process but also and mainly a reaction to obstacles and critical points or situations.

By definition 'Perseverance' refers to a 'refusal

to be discouraged by failure, doubts, or difficulties, and a steadfast or dogged pursuit of an end or an undertaking' (Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms 1968: 606; see also Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, Vol II). The present definition of the concept as the learner's ability to tackle a crisis adds to the usual definition found in dictionaries, and focuses on the instantaneous ability of the learner or the individual to deal with the difficulties, doubts or failures in his refusal to be discouraged and steadfast or dogged pursuit of an end or an undertaking. In this sense, perseverance can be either a natural quality or a quality learned from school or from society at large and is therefore the responsibility of the learner, but can be shared with the teacher. This is what justifies the repercusssion of learning on perseverance in the model. This repercussion continues all the way back to motivation through different possible routes: straight back through 'Incentive', via 'Activity Enjoyment' and 'Incentive', or via 'Incentive' back to the 'Individual Difference' characteristics, etc.

The present view of perseverance has to be distinguished, however, from a 'social' type of perseverance observed in most developing countries as the basis of drop outs in schools. The factors affecting this type of perseverance are mainly socioeconomic and therefore out of the learner's control, or competence to handle.

The learning process as a whole constitutes a feedback loop system. What has been learned has an impact on the learner as a whole (i.e. on the different aspects of the learner's life through himself) as Pattison (1976: 290) quoted earlier suggests, and establishes a self-regulating servo-mechanism, i.e. a feedback loop system. This is shown by the arrow from the 'Proficiency and/or Achievement' to the box labelled 'LEARNER'.

The model considers perseverance as the key to learning. It helps or urges the learner to look for learning strategies and techniques that he needs to learn and achieve his learning objectives and/or purposes; it helps or forces the learner to perform or interact and use his new or newly learned or acquired language. But since perseverance is only subsequent to motivation a study of motivation proves essential when dealing with it. This is in fact what justifies our focus on both motivation and perseverance and actually means that if it is true that motivation is essential for learning to take place, it is equally true that without perseverance no learning is likely to take place, thus suggesting that there is no direct correlation between 'Motivation' and 'Learning' and that 'perseverance' is at least as important as motivation in the process

of learning other languages.

If we take this point and the view that effective learning or success in learning does maintain and indeed increase perseverance which in turn sustains and increases the learner's motivation in a sort of feedback loop system, we must admit that a language course should account for motivation and perseverance as part of the course content. One way of making this possible is by developing the learner's ability to tackle critical situations or crisis points in the course of his learning, and by allowing a fair amount of freedom to use his ability to deal with the crisis. The suggestion is that motivation and perseverance should play some role in language syllabuses and learning materials, and serve the purpose of the learner's freedom within the constraints of their acquired habits, their background and their society. If this is achieved then the problem of language teaching and/or learning for communication would have moved nearer to a solution. Freedom is important in any type of learning because we are free 'by nature' and so are we in the informal language learning or acquisition context. For more effective language learning for communication, a course should thus exploit the learner's freedom to use his motivation and his perseverance in the sense of this paper.

Motivation and Perseverance, Freedom, and Language and/ for Communication

The suggestion above can be schematically represented as in Figure 3, and reformulated as follows: in informal language contexts, people freely use their motivation and perseverance to learn foreign languages for communication. For a formal language learning context to result in a similar achievement as in the informal context, curricula, syllabuses and coursebooks ought to account for the learner's freedom, motivation, and perseverance.

Now how can this be done? Possibly through some type of spiral syllabuses or through the methodological solution to the communication problem of language teaching (Widdowson and Brumfit: 1981, Brumfit 1983/84) focusing on fluency rather than accuracy activities. A further suggestion would be an operational-type input syllabus where the learner is told why and how to do what he is required to do, and encouraged to explain why and how he is doing what he is doing as well as to ask for reasons and purposes of what he is asked to do. This is because 'operative motivation' (in the first place) is mainly concerned with links: between perceived goals or aims and objectives; between interest and the meaning that goals, aims and objectives take for the learner; between the perceived progress and relevance to the

learner from his point of view, and the subsequent confidence resulting from some evidence of progress; links between many other things, which makes the concept of 'motivation' complex and at times confusing. This linking concept of motivation is clearly formulated by Hill (1984: 42) and related to the learner's freedom of choice.

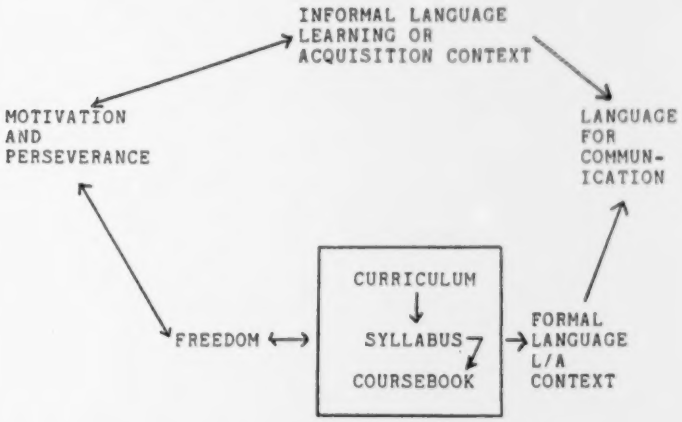

Fig. 3 Language and Communication in formal and informal Learning/acquisition contexts

With reference to the actual act of communication, the learner should be either trained or encouraged to use some of those strategies which good extrovert communicators use (see Pearse 1982). These strategies are indicative of some perseverance in communication, and as Pattison (1976: 290) and the model suggest, success in communication resulting from these strategies will enhance the learner's perseverance and sustain, and eventually increase his motivation. Failure is likely to decrease the level of perseverance and eventually kill the learner's motivation.

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FOREIGNER REGISTER

0 INTRODUCTION

In recent years increasing attention has been paid to the simplified speech styles used by adult native speakers (NSs) to those who do not have full command of the language of the community, such as babies, foreigners, the deaf. Surprisingly, it appears that even those with little experience of, say, children or foreigners make systematic adjustments to their speech patterns when talking to them, and it is speculated that these simplified speech styles, by making the language input more comprehensible, are a vital ingredient in both first and second language acquisition, whether in formal or in informal language learning contexts. If this is correct, a full description of the simplified styles is clearly of importance not only for an understanding of the language learning process, but also for the design of language learning materials.

The simplified speech style used to foreigners is known as foreigner talk (FT) or foreigner register (FR). It is assumed to be a register of the adult NS's verbal repertoire, just as informal register or technical register are, and most work on foreigner register has attempted to detail the systematic structural differences which mark out this register from the register used amongst NSs.

In our own work on speech to foreigners, however, we have found the notion of foreigner register unilluminating. In some earlier work we looked at how NSs clarify questions that the non-native speaker (NNS) has not understood. We hypothesized that in restating a question the NNS had not understood, the NS would use a more simplified style; hence the restated question would contain more than the original question of the features said to be characteristic of FR. This, however, turns out not to be the case. And we have found that a functional rather than a formal characterization of the changes in the questions put to the NNSs is much more useful. This has led us to look in more detail at the notion of FR and to ask whether the speech style used for foreigners is indeed best viewed as a register.

In the first section of the paper we shall give an overview of work on foreigner register and in the second we shall describe our work on questions and show why we have found the notion of FR no help. This will bring us to a theoretical discussion of register, and in particular how, we believe, FR differs fundamentally from other sociolinguistic registers. Finally, we shall argue for a functional rather than a formal characterization of speech to foreigners.

1 FOREIGNER REGISTER

Ferguson (1971, 1975) and Ferguson and DeBose (1977) stress the systematic, conventionalized nature of speech to foreigners. They call this style of speech a register (foreigner register or foreigner talk) because it differs from other registers in the language by a set of structural features and by the uses to which it is put. The distinctive structural features they note are:

(i) use of slow, exaggerated pronunciation with greater overall loudness;
(ii) use of full forms rather than contractions;
(iii) loss of inflection;
(iv) lack of function words such as articles and the copula;
(v) use of shorter sentences;
(vi) use of parataxis rather than subordination;
(vii) use of simpler, more standard vocabulary.

These findings have been corroborated in studies by Freed (1981), Hatch et al. (1978), and Meisel (1977).

Some of the simplifications noted by Ferguson, such as use of uninflected forms, involve violation of the grammatical norms of the language, whereas others, like the use of parataxis rather than subordination, involve only a choice of particular options present in the grammar of a language. Arthur et al. (1980) claim that the use of ungrammatical forms by a NS to a NNS is in fact very rare and that the adjustments the NS makes are almost always within the bounds set by the rule structure of the standard language. They therefore distinguish between FT and FR, terms that Ferguson and others use interchangeably. They call FT the simplified speech style that violates adult grammatical norms, being characterized by, e.g., loss of inflection and omission of function words, and FR the style that conforms grammatically with normal adult usage but modifies the frequency or frequency range of options present in the standard language - shorter sentences, parataxis, etc. In a study of how ticket-agents responded to foreign-accented and to native callers, Arthur et al. found that replies to NNSs were fully grammatical, but shorter, less informative, more repetitious and grammatically simpler. These results replicated earlier findings by Henzl (1973), who compared how a group of Czechs told stories to other Czechs with how they told them to American students of Czech. She found that the NSs in speaking to the NNSs used shorter, better-formed sentences with fewer colloquialisms and that their pronunciation was slower and more accurate in terms of standard norms. According to Arthur et al.'s definitions, both Henzl's study and their own present instances of FR rather than FT.

To sum up, according to Arthur et al., although FR does not differ grammatically from the standard language, there are a set of structural features whose frequency of use marks out FR as differing from other registers in the language.

2 OUR STUDY

We should like now to describe briefly our study of questions and their clarifications, which gave rise to our misgivings about the notion FR. The study is based on five informal conversations in French, each between a NS of French and a NS of English with only rudimentary knowledge of French. There were five NSs of French, each of whom took part in one conversation, and two NNSs, one of whom took part in three conversastions, and the other in two. So the NSs were different in each conversation. As none of the conversational pairs had previously met, the NS was given some information about the NNS he/she was paired with in order to facilitate conversation. Each conversation lasted between twenty and thirty minutes.

In no conversation did the NS use simplifications which violated the grammatical rules of standard French. In Arthur et al.'s terms, the style the NSs used in these conversations must therefore be FR. As we have said, rather than compare this FR with the style used among NSs, which is what other studies have done, we looked at variations within the speech addressed to the NNSs. We concentrated on the NSs' reformulations of questions because we saw them as a particularly promising source of comparative data. When the NS asks the NNS a question, the NNS is put on the spot and it is quite clear if he or she has not understood. Non-comprehension of a statement can often be successfully disguised by the use of a variety of filler, but a question typically requires a specific response, the formulation of which presupposes a grasp not only of the question's propositional content but also of its relevance to the context. From the questioner's point of view, once a question has been asked but not understood, it is much more difficult to abandon than a statement because of the fact that it imposes a specific demand on the addressee. Abandoning a question seems to be an indictment of the addressee's capacity to communicate. NSs therefore go to great lengths to make their questions understood. They will repeat a question many times, using a variety of means to try and get its substance across (Hatch et al. 1978 found the same). Some of the questions in our study were restated as many as six times. Assuming that successive tokens of a given question represent attempts to clarify its content, which itself remains more or less constant, in each restatement the NS is presumably trying to facilitate the NNS's task of comprehension. The restatements are thus an excellent source of comparative data on NS adjustments to NNSs, i.e. of shifts within FR.

One or two examples from out data may be helpful at this point. The first occurs quite far on in a conversation, and the theme of the discussion at this point is the NNS's childhood in Ireland. The NS asks the question:

(1) NS: Mais, et tu as vécu dans ... dans quelle région en Irlande?
NNS: Pardon?
NS: C'était quelle région en Irlande? Est-ce que tu ...

tu as vécu non pas à Dublin mais dans la campagne, tu me disais?
NNS: Je ne comprends pas exactement.
NS: Attends. Tu as vécu dans la campagne?
NNS: Vécu?
NS: Vécu - to live.
NNS: Ah oui.
NS: Tu as vécu dans la campagne?
NNS: Oui, oui.
NS: Et.
NNS: Oui, oui.
NS: Quelle partie, c'était quelle région?
NNS: Er ... Wexford, sud-est.

The only untypical feature of this exchange is the NS's use of translation, and we shall come back to that later. She is trying to establish where the NNS lived in Ireland, and after various different attempts, she eventually succeeds. It is interesting to look in detail at each attempt to get the question across. She asks him first "Tu as vécu dans quelle région en Irlande?". She then simplifies to the impersonal "C'était quelle région?". Still no response, so she expands to contextualize the question, taking it one step back, as it were, and explicitly stating her presupposition (which derives from an earlier part of the discussion): "Tu as vécu non pas à Dublin mais dans la campagne, tu me disais?". She then simplifies this to "Tu as vécu dans la campagne?". The NNS identifies vécu as being the source of the problem, and the NS translates it for him. She then repeats her previous question which contains the presupposition of her primary question - again "Tu as vécu dans la campagne?". This understood, she finally returns to the primary question "Quelle partie, c'était quelle région?". She uses synonyms, presumably to increase the NNS's chance of understanding the concept. And at last he understands! The second example is similar. It is taken from near the beginning of a different conversation. The NS has been asking the NNS about his experiences grape-picking in France:

(2) NS: Est-ce qu'il y avait des gens du nord de la France?
NNS: Pardon?
NS: Est-ce qu'il y avait des gens qui venaient du nord de la France? Des mineurs du nord? Est-ce que tu as recontré
NNS: Ah oui.
NS: des mineurs?
NNS: Des mineurs?
NS: Les gens qui travaillent dans le [charbon.
NNS: [ah oui oui oui exactement

Here the NS first tries to make it clear that du nord de la France refers to the origin of gens by inserting qui venaient. She then repeats the key elements of the question, replacing gens by mineurs, which, if the NNS had the necessary background knowl-

edge, would help to elucidate nord (in a French context there is a strong association between miners and the North). In her third reformulation she makes the question much more specific and personal by replacing il y avait by tu as rencontré. Finally she defines mineurs in response to the NNS's indication that the word is opaque to him.

Now, what these analyses show is that in formal linguistic terms we cannot say that each restatement of a question is a simplification. Sometimes a longer form is used, sometimes a shorter form; sometimes a synonym is used, sometimes a word bearing some other kind of semantic relation to the item it replaces is chosen, sometimes a word is just repeated; sometimes the syntax is more complex, sometimes it is simpler. However, it is quite clear what the NS is trying to do in order to get the NNS to understand, as our pre-theoretical exegesis of (1) and (2) shows. In our data we have found this kind of pattern repeated over and over. While there is unambiguous morphosyntactic or semantic simplification only in well under half the restatements, it is quite easy to see some kind of simplification strategy at work in all the restatements - strategies like "give the NNS more to go on", "provide a sample answer", "check that the presuppositions are right", "focus on what might be a troublesome element". We have discussed these strategies at greater length in another paper (Maclaran and Singleton 1984). Why we raise the issue here is that such strategies cannot be adequately described in formal terms - they are just not formal simplifications. Hence our disaffection with the notion of FR. At this point we need to look more closely at the whole concept of register.

3 REGISTER

We should first distinguish register from dialect. According to Hudson (1980) a register is a speech variety defined according to its use, whereas a dialect is a variety defined according to its user. There is in fact a certain haziness in what counts as a register. Trudgill (1974) considers registers to be characterized solely by vocabulary differences, particularly vocabulary differences tied to occupational situation, so he would say that there is a medical register, a legal register, a register for mining, etc. However, most sociolinguists take a wider definition of register, seeing it as a set of linguistic expressions, whether syntactic, morphological, phonological or lexical, which all have the same social distribution. Thus the formal/informal or literary/non-literary distinctions can be seen to be ones of register.

Ferguson (1971), who first talked about the simplified speech style used to foreigners as a register, conforms to this latter view of register as defined jointly in terms of a set of structural features and the uses to which it is put. FR is by definition used to foreigners and differs from speech to other NSs, he maintains, by a conventional, systematic and culturally

shared set of linguistic modifications. The same view is taken by Arthur et al. (1980: 112):

> A register is a set of grammatical modifications associated with the social contexts in which such modifications occur. It is generally acknowledged that register can shift along a dimension from formal to informal. This study presents evidence that there is another dimension of register shifting: from complex or elaborate to simple.

So Arthur et al. are making the strong claim that FR is a unidimensional scale varying in degree of complexity. This, of course, is what we were initially presupposing in our analysis of clarifications of questions. But now we want to take issue with this view. We believe that FR differs in type from what we would consider to be other registers in terms of both dimensions of its definition - the formal and the contextual.

To take the contextual dimension first. Because a register is marked for the context in which it is used, the use of the wrong register for the context is inappropriate. Suppose someone came into a job interview and said "Hi, how you doing?" They would have done something inappropriate - by using an informal style of greeting in a formal situation. The same kind of infelicity results from the use of a non-technical register in a technical context such as a legal contract. Of course, contexts are not fixed - they can be affected by the form of speech itself. By changing the register it is possible to change the context. For example, if a committee chairman has been addressing someone by their Christian name and then switches to academic title, he can thereby signal the start of the meeting, i.e. a change of context. Similarly, a switch from formal to informal register in a journalistic interview can mark an off-the-record comment. The register may be made appropriate to the context by changing the context.

The situation with FR is rather different. To use FR to another NS probably <u>is</u> inappropriate, but the converse does not hold. If a NS uses a standard register to a NNS, he has not done something inappropriate, nor is the NNS thereby raised to NS status (in the way an informal context can be changed into a formal one). Whether or not the addressee is a NNS is a given, rather than a contextual feature that can be adjusted. It is just not a feature like social status or degree of formality. Furthermore, the consequences of a NS not using FR to a NNS may be far more serious than inappropriacy. The NNS may not understand and communication may break down.

Against this it can be argued that the context at issue is not the factual one but the one the speaker thinks holds. The speaker may mistakenly believe he is addressing another NS and choose his register accordingly. The addressee's lack of NS competence will then alert him to his mistake, thereby changing the context and triggering a switch to FR.

However, the switch into FR surely is not triggered because the NS suddenly thinks he is using a style that is inappropriate to the changed context, but because he is being unsuccessful in using an ordinary NS register. The crux of the matter in talking to a NNS is not appropriacy but comprehensibility. A NS has to assess, at each stage of the interaction, how well the NNS is understanding and must choose his form of expression accordingly. Interestingly, it is not necessarily the simplest grammatical forms that the NNS will find easiest to understand. Sometimes a more expanded form is easier to understand, as we found in our data on questions. Similarly, a NNS computer programmer might find technical English much easier to understand than a simpler conversational register, because he might be familiar with technical English from his work. This is just to underline the point that FR is unlike, say, formal register in that its relation to the context is not one of appropriacy but of comprehensibility.

The second dimension of the definition of a register is a formal one - that there should be a set of structural features that mark out one register as being different from others in a speaker's repertoire. Now, whereas certain expressions are marked as intrinsically informal, legal or literary, expressions are not intrinsically marked as being suitable for use to foreigners or not. At this point we should return to the FT/FR distinction. There is, of course, the "You Tarzan, me Jane" FT speech style, which is a caricature of how we speak to foreigners, and as Ferguson (1975) shows, there are certain words like savvy (to know), firestick (gun), which are marked as belonging to this style. But, as Arthur et al. say, this style is used only in very circumscribed situations. In fact Long has found that it only occurs when the NS is socially superior to the NNS, when the NNS is of very low proficiency, and when the NS has had considerable prior FT experience, but of a very limited kind. A typical example of the situation that would give rise to this style would be exchanges between a factory foreman and an immigrant worker. Long says that it does not normally occur otherwise. NSs tend not to violate the grammatical rules of their language when talking to foreigners. Rather they vary the frequency with which they use certain expressions. And this is exactly our point. Whereas an expression like deceased is marked in the lexicon as intrinsically [+formal], expressions used in FR are not marked as intrinsically [+FR] since expressions used in FR are also used, albeit maybe with a different frequency, to other NSs. This is as true of structures as it is of lexical items.

Of course, many of the differences between formal and casual style which interest sociolinguists are not matters of type but of frequency - for instance, the degree to which the progressive verbal suffix ing, as in running, occurs as /ɪn/ rather than /ɪŋ/, or the degree to which the copula is deleted in BEV; both have been correlated by Labov and others with casual versus formal speech style. (Interestingly, there is no functional explanation for either of these correlations.) Now, it was this model of style-shifting as variation along a unidimensional scale

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of frequency of occurrence of certain features that suggested to us the probability that style-shifting in FR would show up in clarifications of questions that had not been understood, i.e. that a restatement of a question would have a greater frequency of the features characteristic of FR. And this is also what Arthur et al.'s model suggests - as we have said, they directly compare style-shifting along a simple/complex dimension with the more widely studied register-shifting along a formal/informal dimension. But, as we have shown in the previous section of this paper, the model does not hold. This, we have argued, is because formal simplicity does not equate with functional simplicity and it is functional simplicity that is at issue in NS/NNS interaction. FR is unlike a sociolinguistic register, since a sociolinguistic register is a formal entity that does not necessarily have a functional explanation, whereas what is going on in speech to foreigners clearly does have such a functional explanation.

To summarize this section: if a register is a speech variety defined according to its context of use, we have argued (i) that to take the context of FR as being defined by the presence of a NNS addressee obscures the task-oriented nature of speech to foreigners; and (ii) that there is not a well-defined variety used to foreigners, since strategies for facilitating comprehension have a mixed influence on linguistic structure.

4 CONCLUSION

We do not wish to deny that NSs make linguistic simplifications when they speak to NNSs - there is ample evidence to show that they do. What we have argued is that these simplifications tell only half the story, since they are a by-product of the more basic simplification of functional structure. The advantages of taking a functional approach such as ours are several. Firstly, linguistic complexifications, which appear to be counter-evidence to a description of FR, can usually be explained in terms of facilitating strategies such as "give the NNS more to go on", or "make the presuppositions of what you have said explicit". We saw instances of this in our two examples. Secondly, whereas in formal terms a distinction is made between FR and FT, in terms of facilitating strategies there is no need to, since there is nothing anomalous in a NS using, say, an ungrammatical citation form or abbreviating an utterance to the point of ungrammaticality. It is simply that in FT the strategies have particular formal consequences, though they are the same strategies at work. And indeed, the most extreme form of a functional strategy is the use of translation, as in our first example, where the NS gives the English for vécu. In formal terms expressions incorporating translation have to be set apart both from FT and from FR, but they can be straightforwardly accounted for in functional terms. So we would argue that a functional account not only has explanatory power, but can also give a uniform treatment of more data than can a formal account.

AVAILABLE

Recent work by Long has suggested that what he calls interactional adjustments by NSs in conversation with NNSs are made much more consistently than formal modifications - often an interactional modification is observed where there is no linguistic simplification. By interactional modifications he means such things as the NS's greater use of comprehension checks with a NNS than with a NS, the NS's greater tolerance of ambiguity, the NS's acceptance of unintentional topic switches by the NNS when he would not accept them from a NS.

Our point is that it is the view of speech to foreigners as a simplified register that leads to such an opposition between form and interaction. If, as we have advocated, a functional perspective is taken, then the mixed influence of facilitating strategies on linguistic structure will be understood, and a truer picture can be given of speech to foreigners.

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BRIDGING THE FORMAL AND INFORMAL FIELDS OF IRISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AT PRIMARY LEVEL

1 THE FORMAL CONTEXT OF THE LEARNING OF IRISH

A critical examination of the formal context within which the Irish language is taught at primary level shows that the existing syllabi are products of the linguistic thinking of the 1960s. The official programmes, known as the Cúrsaí Comhrá Gaeilge, have as their foundation a quantitative study, entitled Buntús Gaeilge, which was initiated in 1963. The roots of this undertaking can be traced to the University of Georgetown, U.S.A., where an t-Athair Colmán Ó Huallacháin had been deeply impressed by trends in modern linguistic studies. In December 1962 he was appointed Advisor on Linguistics to the Irish Minister for Education: shortly afterwards, work was begun on what was to be a comprehensive analysis of approximately half a million words of everyday speech from each Gaeltacht area of Ireland. The preliminary report, published in 1966, embodied the most frequently used lexical items, structures and syntactic units of the Irish language. This publication - which, it must be stressed, is not a language course in itself - represents what was then considered to be the "nucleus" of Irish. Language programmes based on this "content-nucleus" were then developed and introduced as the Cúrsaí Comhrá Gaeilge into the primary school system between 1967 and 1970. At that time, the courses were seen as breaking new ground, and the Department of Education was the force responsible for the innovative move.

It can hardly be contested, nevertheless, that the syllabi under examination are fundamentally language-centred, originating as they do from a clearly defined body of language which is to be preserved through direct transmission. In this orientation, the courses are at variance with the philosophy of the 1971 Primary School Curriculum, which is essentially learner-centred in its recognition that "the child is ... the most active agent in his own education" (Department of Education 1971: part I, 18). The relevance to learners of language-centred programmes is particularly questionable in this instance, in which the language-content was collected and analysed at some distance from the contemporary scene.

On the important question of aims and objectives, the Cúrsaí Comhrá Gaeilge are again open to criticism. For a clarification of the overriding aim of the teaching the Primary School Curriculum Handbook must be consulted; here the aim enunciated, albeit indirectly, is that pupils should be able to discuss through Irish topics which interest them (Department of Education 1971: part I, 58). Nowhere in the courses are objectives stated unambiguously, a weakness that proves problematic on two fronts. On

the one hand, it contributes to a lack of direction, since it is not clear to teachers or learners exactly how much of the lesson content is to be mastered in the sense that pupils should be able to use it for real communication. On the other hand, the absence of objectives hinders scientific assessments of learner progress, as came to light in the recent criterion-referenced assessments of spoken Irish conducted by John Harris (Harris 1984: 24f.).

As regards course format, it will be recalled that in the 1960s the audio-visual approach was still enjoying a world-wide vogue; and it is hardly surprising that, as a consequence, the new programmes were tailored to the prevailing fashion. A teacher's manual was provided for each class-level, giving a structured lesson for each week of the school year. In addition, a complete audio-visual/audio-lingual kit, in the form of deilbhíní (figurines), filmstrips and taped material, was provided. With the exception of eight lessons in each manual devoted to the revision of grammatical points, the normal lesson-format is as follows: a limited quantity of exemplary language is presented in narrative and dialogue form, and a number of stimulus-prompts are specified to elicit from pupils the exemplary language which they have heard. Grammar is taught through a series of drills and substitution exercises based on structures selected from the language-content of the lesson. Suggestions are offered to teachers for related exercises in free conversation.

In the classroom, teachers are advised to follow the five steps of the audio-visual methodology, although in the senior classes they are not encouraged to dwell on the first three mechanical steps (Department of Education 1978: 6). The manner in which lessons are tightly harnessed to one particular methodology weakens the programmes, since it discourages teachers from experimenting with different methods and approaches. Furthermore, it is unfortunate that the particular methodology should be audio-visual since this method, in its pure form, does little to engender creative language use. As a product of the structuralist and behaviourist theories elaborated by Leonard Bloomfield and B. F. Skinner, before they were all but demolished by the Chomskyan revolution and its aftermath, the audio-visual method tends to produce mechanistic language use, exemplary in form but often devoid of the semantic preoccupations of those who use it. In particular, the segmented treatment of grammar, encouraged during the fourth step of the methodology, is of dubious value, since it is isolated from genuine communication. It is hardly surprising that the unrestricted flow of Irish expected to emerge during the fifth step is often disappointing, when one considers that the four previous steps do nothing to encourage natural language use. Furthermore, constraints of time generally limit widespread participation in drama or discussion, with the undesirable result that for many children the formal Irish class is a mechanical and uninspiring experience.

Up to this point, attention has been confined to the formal teaching of the spoken language. The Cúrsaí Comhrá Gaeilge are, of course, supported by various graded series of reading and

writing materials. The content of these materials is related, directly or indirectly, to the content of the oral courses themselves, but since the latter are language-centred rather than child-centred, it is not clear that the supportive material is of real relevance or interest to the pupils. Particularly notable is the lack of appeal to authentic sources of reading and writing materials and the failure to exploit the mass media to this end. A second criticism concerns the actual nature of the reading items and of the follow-up exercises designed to develop skills of writing. The format adopted is striking for its lack of variety: almost invariably, the reading item comprises a short story (2-3 pages) relating an adventure or perhaps an amusing incident. Equally predictable are the barrage of written comprehension questions based on the story, the grammatical exercises based on identifiable aspects of language form and, finally, the suggestions for creative writing, usually in essay form.

In fairness it should be stated that a number of promising workbooks have been published in recent years, notably the Lean den Obair/Táim ag Obair series (Mac Domhnaill 1976, 1982). The design of these publications facilitates some measure of integration between productive and receptive skills. Nevertheless, the reading activities follow the same pattern as those in the primary texts, and again the writing activities tend to neglect functional writing in favour of comprehension questions, sentence-completion exercises, grammatical drills, substitution tests, and the common essay. These workbooks, if creatively used, may act as springboards towards more informal language use, but essentially they are rooted in the formal field and the type of language that they aim to produce is generally "pre-communicative", to use today's terminology.

2 A COMMUNICATIVE ALTERNATIVE

The concentration of attention on the learner and his language needs is of paramount importance among the many positive features of the communicative movement. Resources, objectives, assessment techniques and, of course, the programme-content are all carefully constructed to serve the learner in his struggle to effect successful communication through his target language (Richterich and Chancerel 1977: 4). The identification of learner needs in the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project (specifically in The Threshold Level, van Ek 1975) has been so comprehensive that the project has become the keystone for much innovative research on syllabus design, not only on the European mainland but also in Great Britain and Ireland. The spread of this approach is due in large measure to a general recognition of the relevance of the needs categories outlined by the Council of Europe experts. To facilitate discussion of the present research, which was conducted in line with the European project, it may be helpful to recall briefly the principal features of the model. Following an examination of the characteristics of the group learning the target language, predictions are made concern-

ing the roles learners will play, the situations in which they will use the language, and the topics which they are likely to treat through the target language. A practical orientation demands further consideration of (i) the functions which will be performed through the target language and (ii) the notions (or concepts) with regard to which functions are performed.

A related advantage of communicative syllabus design is the concern with specified learning objectives, a feature which reflects the emphasis on the outcomes of learning, voiced increasingly since the early 1970s (Valette and Disick 1972: vii). In harmony with the thinking of Benjamin Bloom, it is recognized today that the purpose of language learning is to bring about a modification in learners' attitudes or behaviour or both (Bloom 1956: 26). The performance objectives identified by Bloom have assumed critical importance; indeed, Wilkins and van Ek have repeatedly stressed the behavioural nature of communicative objectives (Wilkins 1976: 14; van Ek 1975: 4). This focussing on identifiable aspects of behaviour usually enables learners to extend considerably their functional skills at each stage of their learning.

Communicative language teaching is attractive in the freedom that it offers to the teacher with regard to classroom methodology. Although research has begun on a specifically "communicative" methodology in which certain pedagogical procedures practised hitherto are frowned upon, the communicative approach tends to liberate teachers from the shackles of prescribed methodologies. Wilkins has drawn attention to the importance of making methodologies dance to the tune called by objectives rather than the reverse process (Wilkins 1974: 56). Where Wilkins's view prevails, teachers are free to select whatever methodology (or integration of methods) will best secure the communicative objectives of their courses. Obviously, classroom practice must reflect the components of the objectives, but it is significant that established methodologies are never allowed to dominate the goals of the language activity.

The insistence on authenticity which characterizes truly communicative teaching is paradoxically its most demanding and its most rewarding feature. Difficult as it may be to preserve during class, even the youngest language learners will appreciate the relevance of "real" language use. Indeed, the orientation towards genuine exchange of meaning is the very hallmark of the communicative movement and it is evident in the published work of many applied linguists.

To begin with, there is the increasing concern with the notion of appropriate, as opposed to exemplary, social intercourse - a notion greatly advanced through the writings of the American sociolinguist Dell Hymes (1972: 279). Then there is the extension of this idea advanced by Widdowson, who insists not only on appropriate use of form but also on genuinely communicative purposes within language exercises (Widdowson 1978: 5). Again, the search for authenticity is evident in Brumfit's rejec-

tion of the "accuracy model" in favour of the "fluency model". Fluency as a basis for development, he argues,

> may be closer to the apparent learner syllabus of the natural learner in a total immersion situation, in that the naive learner operates more on an oral basis of fluent and inaccurate language than on a careful building up analytically of accurate items according to a descriptive model .... The emphasis is thus on the use, not the possession of the target language. (Brumfit 1979: 188)

On a practical level, there are Littlewood's striking suggestions for the exploitation of the classroom as an authentic social context in itself (Littlewood 1981: 43-64). Finally, one might mention the growing emphasis on the use of authentic materials, highlighted by many applied linguists, notably by Wilkins, who sums up succinctly the comprehension difficulties of learners who have followed conventional language courses: "The fact is that they are not accustomed to hearing (or reading) the language as it is produced by native speakers for native speakers" (Wilkins 1976: 79).

To conclude this section: it is contended that the teaching of Irish at primary level would benefit from a relaxation of its present formality through the introduction of a communicative orientation. This change of emphasis, however, is envisaged not as a descent into informality in the pejorative sense but as a highly controlled and carefully planned journey into the realm of uninhibited expression. It is this realm alone that can nurture the internal acquisition of language, whether it be a mother tongue, a second or a foreign language.

3 BRIDGING THE FORMAL AND THE INFORMAL

I now proceed to discussion of a recent research undertaking which sought to introduce more relevance and flexibility into the teaching of Irish at primary level. Although the work was designed within the mould of the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project, it differed from the established pattern in that the needs categories produced were elicited directly from learners in the classroom, rather than indirectly through the pooled opinions of teachers and applied linguists. The project kit was designed for use in the senior section of the primary school; that is, with pupils in the fifth and sixth standards.

The first problem to be faced concerned the roles which learners might realistically play while communicating through Irish, a delicate question which was met by considering the everyday speech contacts of the group. On the first form of the project kit, respondents were asked to specify ten people with whom they spoke regularly and then to rank these in order of importance on three measures: (i) those with whom they spoke most often; (ii) those with whom they most enjoyed speaking; and (iii)

those with whom they would like to speak Irish. Social roles were then inferred from the list of speech contacts.

On a second form respondents were asked to specify three likely settings for interaction with each of their named interlocutors, in addition to three likely topics of conversation in that setting with that person. In effect, this design enabled each respondent to specify no fewer than ten social roles, thirty settings and ninety topics. (Restrictions were enforced concerning the repetition of suggestions.)

A third form was designed with a view to the identification of the most common functions and notions in the everyday language of the age-group. Respondents were encouraged to recall a genuine conversation which they had had with one of their speech-contacts; they were then requested to write down as accurately as they could the actual language that had been used in the interchange, even if this involved "imperfect" language such as telegraphic speech, occasional use of slang, or incomplete utterances. The overriding criterion was authenticity. The researcher was thus placed in possession of a body of language representing some of the real language use of this group, a source from which functions and notions could be extracted upon analysis.

The project kit also comprised both a fourth form which probed learners' interests in relation to reading and writing materials and a fifth form through which non-interactive listening needs were tapped. Because of limitations of time and space these cannot be discussed in detail in the present paper.

The research project was undertaken with a sample of 123 children representing the population of fifth and sixth standard pupils in the Dublin area. The sample comprised four classes, two single-sex fifth standards and two co-educational sixth standards. An attempt was also made to sample the varying socio-economic backgrounds in the city. (A pilot study was first carried out, after which certain elements of the design were modified.)

Following detailed computer analysis of the data gathered on Forms I, II and III, comprehensive results on needs-categories were produced. In relation to social roles, weighted values were given to reflect the graded preferences expressed by respondents and speech-contacts were then placed in rank order. Significantly, members of the immediate family ranked high on the Irish count, with mother, father, brother and sister occurring in 1st, 2nd, 5th and 6th places respectively. These findings confirm the need for the home dimension to be catered for in Irish courses. The category friends was ranked 3rd, indicating the importance of developing skills of informal expression, and the class teacher was ranked 4th, a finding which focuses attention on the possibility of exploiting the classroom itself as a place where authentic communication can take place. In addition to the extended family, many children expressed an interest in communicating in

Irish with persons living in their locality, notably the shopkeeper (ranked 12th) and the gárda síochána (ranked 14th), as well as sport and leisure contacts such as the team manager (ranked 16th) and fellow boy scouts and girl guides (ranked 17th). These findings point to the need for the alignment of school curricula with media-based programmes designed for the further education of the whole community.

As regards the settings for spoken language use, findings were categorized under six broad headings:

(i) home (35.3% of total responses);
(ii) environmental (31.6%);
(iii) sport/leisure/entertainment (8.9%);
(iv) transport (8.4%);
(v) school (13.6%);
(vi) social (2.1%).

Within these categories much specificity was recorded. For example, home settings included the kitchen (5.4% of total responses) and the garden/yard/wall (3.9%); while sport settings included playing football, hurling, etc. (1.0%), and school settings included the playground (2.5%). Information such as this is obviously of value to teachers endeavouring to impart functional Irish.

More than a hundred topics of conversation were identified in the survey, and these were organized under ten main headings, among the most popular of which were education (16.4% of total responses), sport/leisure/entertainment (29.3%), and shopping/financial affairs (6.0%). Under these headings the following were seen to be common talking-points: school life and organization (5.1%), television/radio (4.4%), and prices/expenses/bills (2.1%). Comparison with the Skeleton Syllabus (Little et al. 1980) shows that the present research threw light on a number of new topics, obviously of particular interest to pre-adolescent learners. Under the heading education these included homework, misbehaviour/punishment, and teachers. Other topics included fire/air/water, colours/sounds/noise, time/date/days of the week, and memories/olden times.

To move on to the results associated with Form III, more than 1,800 functional responses were examined and categorized into 103 language functions arranged under seven broad headings. The two most common functions were to describe people or things (5.7% of total responses) and to express or enquire about intention (4.9%). Another comparison with the Skeleton Syllabus reveals that a number of functions not specified in that publication are relevant to the language use of fifth and sixth standard pupils. New functions which came to light included to placate somebody, to plead ignorance, to induce or bribe somebody to do something, to dare or place a bet, to disparage or belittle somebody, and to dismiss what somebody says.

Within the constraints of this presentation it is impossible

to do justice to the complexity of the results obtained in the survey. Nevertheless, the foregoing summary should have given an indication of the communicative needs of the age-group in question. Survey results, however, are related to conditions of time, so that the practical use to which this type of information can be put is of greater value, in the long term, than any particular set of findings.

Ideally speaking, indications of learner-needs could be used as the basis for a totally innovative Irish syllabus for use in the primary school - a truly learner-centred communicative design. If this were provided at national level, it would be necessary to ensure that the design did not ignore the vital needs of any particular group in the country. The type of project described in this paper provides for such a contingency, for it can be used by any teacher in any situation to provide a clear profile of the language needs of individual pupils. A new syllabus could conceivably be constructed on the lines of the innovative second-level pilot scheme in Irish, Mise agus Tusa, developed by Comhar na Múinteoirí Gaeilge.

More realistically speaking, findings of this kind can be used by practising teachers to plan their yearly or weekly language schemes. It is obvious enough that the needs-enquiry lends itself directly to a purely functional, notional or topic-based organization. It could also serve as the basis for an approach in which, as Littlewood suggests (1981: 81), these different organizational principles might be combined. For example, it would be possible to experiment with a situational-functional-notional approach.

It will be recalled that the first two forms in the project kit allowed for an interrelation of the various needs categories. Through the use of this feature in the processing of results, the teacher can focus attention on one particular social role (or on one of the learner's speech-contacts), then identify the most common settings for communication in that role, and finally isolate the most frequently discussed topics in that setting. To illustrate from my own findings, in communication between friends the setting playing was seen to be the most common, and the most frequently discussed topics in that setting were games, football and homework. In itself this combination provides the basis for much language development. A notional-functional dimension can be introduced quite easily at this point through an exploitation of the interrelation feature built into the third project form. That is to say, a precise identification can be made of the functions and notions which are associated in the learners' language with the role-category friends, with the setting playing and with the topic football.

Similarly, the initial focus could be on any setting or topic selected by the teacher, and a comprehensive and realistic framework of situational, functional and notional elements could be elaborated.

A variation of this technique could be a functional-situational approach, that is, one with the focus of attention on language functions rooted in specific contexts. Respondents' contributions as volunteered on Form III could provide an authentic foundation for this type of scheme. An example is provided by one of the responses submitted by the all-girls' fifth standard. The respondent specified her father as the second interlocutor for the conversation, which was set on a walk during which the topic birthday present was discussed. The text was as follows:

Respondent:	Daddy, have you any idea what I could get Mammy for her birthday?
Father:	Well ... No ... not that I can think of.
Respondent:	'Cause, you see, I'm a bit stuck for what to get her, and a lot of things are very dear.
Father:	She might like a new purse.
Respondent:	Well, the one she has is lovely, even though it's quite old, and I don't think I could get her a nicer one for a low price.
Father:	If you didn't want to get her a purse, you could get her a bunch of flowers and some different bars of chocolate.
Respondent:	I'll think about it. I might get her a purse after all, or maybe I'll come up with some other idea.

The main element in this dialogue might be identified as the function to suggest or propose a course of action (underlined in text). Its first occurrence is followed, in the father's reply, by the functions to cover a pause, to negate, and to express uncertainty. The respondent's next contribution contains the function to give an explanation, in addition to a dual function, to complain about something and to make a statement of fact.

The second occurrence of the main function contains a secondary shade of meaning, to express likes or dislikes, and it is followed, on the respondent's part, by the functions to praise, to describe, and to express a personal opinion.

The third occurrence of the main function precedes the function to express intention, which in turn is followed by two instances of the functions to express possibility.

Further analysis of the text reveals that the most important grammatical requisite for the performance of these functions is the conditional mood, which is used in all three instances of the main function. The future tense is also needed ("I'll think") as well as the comparative adjective ("nicer").

Anyone who is familiar with the type of simulation and role-play activities that are used in communicative language teaching will be quick to spot the potential of authentic exchanges like the one reproduced above. For example, the learners' submissions could be used as the basis for "cued dialogues" along the lines

suggested by Littlewood (1981: 51). These could be employed as an attractive follow-up to the direct pedagogical focus on the functions identified in our analysis. In the case of this particular dialogue, the social context could be varied, for example to represent two boy scouts discussing a birthday present for another friend while playing in the club hall. Learner cues might be structured as follows:

Learner A You meet B in the club hall	Learner B You meet A in the club hall
A: Greet B.	A:
B:	B: Greet A in return.
A: Ask B if he has any suggestions for a birthday present for another friend.	A:
B:	B: Hesitate. Say you can't think of any. Ask about the price range.
A: Say how much you can spend.	A:
B:	B: Suggest buying a wallet.
A: Reject this suggestion. Explain your reasons.	A:
B:	B: Make a different suggestion.
A: React to this suggestion yourself.	A:

Needless to add, the fact that the dialogue is set in a likely situation and is based on authentic language use as volunteered by the learners themselves, increases the relevance and appeal of the activity. A number of changes, of course, can be introduced into the social situation and relationship in order to sensitize learners to differences in register and appropriacy of language form.

To conclude, it is suggested that any teacher with the advancement of Irish at heart could well consider the immense possibilities in spanning the formal and informal domains of language learning through the devising of a bridge built from communicative material.

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INTERACTION BETWEEN LEARNER AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: ISSUES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING MATERIALS FOR ADULT LEARNERS OF IRISH

1 BACKGROUND

This paper considers some of the issues that have confronted the research project undertaken by the Centre for Language and Communication Studies (CLCS), Trinity College, Dublin, to develop communicative learning materials for adult learners of Irish. The project stems from the following related factors:

(i) CLCS's interest in self-instructional language learning, which has both an economic/practical and a pedagogic/methodological focus (Little et al. 1984: 3);

(ii) the findings relative to Irish of CLCS's survey of the student populations of Trinity College and other third-level educational institutions in the State, conducted in 1980 - these showed that a significant minority (approximately one third) of the students surveyed responded positively to the idea of improving their knowledge of Irish (Little et al. 1984);

(iii) the multi-dimensional syllabus for Irish that has been drawn up on the basis of these findings and which in general follows the model of van Ek's Threshold Level (1975);

(iv) an endowment from the Bank of Ireland to help finance the production of learning materials which would fulfil the aims of that syllabus and which could also be piloted in the intensive Irish courses which CLCS provides for employees of the Bank.

The fact that a substantial minority of young adults responds positively to the idea of taking courses in Irish is typical of Irish learning/teaching experience over the past 200 years. In Ireland there has always existed a section of the adult public which has sought further learning of and study through Irish. The motivating factors range from ideological/integrative to instrumental, and the results have been very varied. To provide for this public, but also in answer to the State's official attitude and the voluntary movements' concern for the survival of the language, courses for adults have been a constant feature of the Irish scene, both inside and outside the formal system of education. One example of this is the following extract from Belfast's Northern Star, April 1795, which could almost be seen as advocating language for specific purposes, but probably reflects a "grammar and translation" orientation if one is to judge by the publications of the early 1800s:

Irish Language

> An attempt to revive the grammatical and critical knowledge of the Irish language in this town is generously made by Mr. Lynch: he teaches publicly in the Academy and privately in several families ... It is particularly interesting to all who wish for the improvement and Union of this neglected and divided kingdom. By our understanding and speaking it we could more easily and effectually communicate our sentiments and instructions to our Countrymen; and thus mutually improve and conciliate each other's affections.
>
> The merchant and artist would reap great benefit from the knowledge of it. They would then be qualified for carrying on Trade and Manufactures in every part of their native country. (cit. Ó Snodaigh 1973: 11)

The establishment of organizations and societies with a more specifically linguistic, as opposd to a generally cultural, bias during the latter part of the last century encouraged discussion of teaching methods and much experimentation. The Gaelic League classes would have used the Direct Method in association with structurally organized course books such as Father O'Growney's Simple Lessons in Irish. The following examples of grammatical points from the latter make historically interesting reading:

> Tá a lán daoine ag foghlaim teangadh na hÉireann le tamall, nach bhfuil? Tá go deimhin, agus tá mórán daoine ag léigheadh agus ag sgríobhadh Gaedhilge anois, thar mar bhí deich mbliadhna fichead ó shoin. (O'Growney 1900:14)
>
> [Translation: For some time now many people have been learning the language of Ireland, have they not? Yes indeed, and there are many more people reading and writing Irish now than there were thirty years ago.]

In his introduction to the Phrase Method Handbook, first published in 1919, Eoin Mac Néill expressed sentiments that find an echo in the writings of some of those who nowadays advocate the communicative approach to language teaching:

> In my opinion, Father Toal's method is the real direct method. The "direct method" introduced into the teaching of Irish some years ago was not sufficiently direct. Owing to its plan, it became a method of teaching grammar - i.e. the science of language - through the medium of usage. But the aim of most language teaching is to impart the art of using language, not the science of its structure; to impart the instinctive sense of mastery, not the scientific analysis of its parts, whether these be sounds, or words, or phrases. A parent teaches a child how to use its limbs, not what is the anatomy of them. In language teaching whatever tends to focus attention on scientific detail is, in most cases, a cause of retardation in two ways - in creating a sense of

> difficulties which for a long time seem to increase rather than diminish, and in distracting the attention continually from the thing heard or said, and from its meaning, to a consideration of its structure. (O Tuathail 1919: 8)

Today in the teaching of Irish we are beginning to draw on the current thinking on language as communication, seeing its particular suitability in the context of a lesser used language, where any future depends on use rather than on the passive competence generally developed by school-based instruction.

Irish language course materials are much in demand here in Ireland for the many courses run for adults by organizations and education authorities and also for individual improvers working independently - any new language course tends to head the best-seller list in the weeks following its publication. The CLAR Report (1975), for example, found that as many as one third of the then "current users" of the language comprised a group who had not used Irish in either home or school, but had improved their competence in the language by voluntarily opting for Irish classes outside and after school experience. This group was engaged chiefly in lower middle-class occupations and was centred around Dublin, Leinster and the more prosperous counties. A relatively new focus for adult courses is provided by the parents of children attending the growing network of Irish-medium nursery groups and primary schools.

The first level of a recent multi-media course, Anois is Arís, broadcast by Radio Telefís Éireann in 1981-2, was reported on by Devitt et al. (1983) on the basis of questionnaires filled in week by week by a volunteer group of learners. The findings of this research indicate

(i) that for many people their school-based learning had not given them either the competence or the confidence to use Irish for ordinary communicative purposes, despite the declared (though vaguely specified) aims of both the school curriculum as stated in the Department of Education's Rules and the language planning objectives of the State as elaborated in documents issuing from State bodies set up for purposes of maintaining and furthering Irish as a vernacular;

(ii) that an interested learning population exists, generally between the ages of 25 and 45, who would wish to acquire communicative competence in Irish;

(iii) that a self-instructional course, taken at home, perhaps in conjunction with other members of the family, would suit and might be chosen by this population;

(iv) that their participation in support groups and/or classes would depend a great deal on both convenience and how the group/class was conducted;

(v) that the cultural content of the course would be important for these learners;

(vi) that inter-personal use of Irish, especially at home, is a concern of these learners.

The particular issues, however, which we have had to consider in the preparation of our communicative learning materials are not so neatly and easily categorizable. An attempt will be made in this paper to treat them under three headings, although some overlap is inevitable. First, we will look at our adult learners as learners and consider how their likely previous learning experience in relation to our communicatively oriented materials; secondly, since our course depends on authentic materials, we consider what constitutes the sociolinguistic reality of Irish today; and thirdly, since a communicative course orients learners towards use of the target language with other users, we examine the learners' perceptions of themselves as potential users of Irish. While we shall be drawing on several sources in this three-pronged approach, our principal source will be CLCS's recently published survey report, Learning Second Languages in Ireland (Little et al. 1984).

2 THE LEARNERS AS LEARNERS

Harris (1982: 111) points out that "the combination of linguistic and educational characteristics associated with the situation in which Irish is taught is unusual." In fact, Irish is offered as a subject (although it is not compulsory for examination purposes) for pupils from age 4 to age 18 (school attendance being compulsory between 6 and 16 years) - and this although the language does not have a highly visible presence in the world outside school.

Leaving aside some examples of schools in Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking) areas and the type of Irish-medium schools generally found in urban areas, the dominant teaching methods in use, particularly over the last 15 to 20 years, could be described along a continuum from audio-visual in the majority of primary and most junior post-primary classes, through aural-oral to grammar-translation in middle and senior post-primary classes, with some incidental use of Irish for purposes of classroom communication throughout. Methodological continuity between levels is an issue that is only beginning to be given serious consideration. The aims of the syllabi offered, which have been devised and selected chiefly by the Department of Education, are: development of oral ability at primary level and vaguely specified objectives of accuracy and fluency in speech and writing at post-primary level. No clearly defined behavioural objectives currently exist for any level - content summaries of linguistic items are available for each year of primary level and a range of texts is prescribed for post-primary certificate examinations.

The first analysis of achievement in spoken Irish in primary schools has recently been published (Harris 1984); the results generally are considered disappointing. A large gap apparently exists between the stated goals of teaching spoken Irish and the pupils' progress towards that goal, although non-grammar-related objectives (comprehension, fluency of oral description) are at least minimally achieved by a substantial proportion of pupils.

Summarizing the results of various surveys over the past ten years or so, Harris (1982: 90) concluded that "Irish is perceived by parents and/or teachers as causing more difficulty to pupils and being associated with less satisfactory pupil progress than other subjects at both primary and post-primary level." he also noted that pupils assess themselves as more proficient at second order skills the further they advance through the education system. Despite these perceptions of teachers and parents, however, a motivational factor to be taken account of is that among the living languages taught in Irish schools, Irish is apparently perceived as the least difficult to operate in (Little et al. 1984: 47).

Teachers at all levels - some of whom have difficulty in articulating good reasons for teaching Irish at all (Lindsey 1975) - argue for more conversation-oriented courses and more relevant examinations, particularly at post-primary level (Ó Domhnalláin 1975, Ó Donnchú 1983).

These findings on dominant teaching methods, their results in pupil competence and the ensuing attitudes engendered are borne out in Little et al. 1984. The likely characteristics of the learning contact with Irish that potential users of new learning materials would have had may be summarized as follows.

The majority of respondents (both undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) students) had experience of Irish chiefly through formal learning contexts, at primary and post-primary school. Slightly over half reported that Irish was the school subject they had least enjoyed. This may have been the result of (i) the learning activities they experienced - "mechanical" exercises (written grammar exercises, for example) predominated over more "creative" exercises (free conversation, debates), and (ii) the learning/teaching resources, which were markedly textual in character, with low use of audio-visual/non-textual materials (although in general oral activities predominated at primary level, the reverse was true at post-primary level). Receptive skills were perceived as having been acquired to a greater level of proficiency than productive skills, and it was also in the area of receptive skills that subjects reported personal use of second languages (Little et al. 1984, Table 47). Communicative skills did not appear to have been widely developed through school experience: 51.2% of UG subjects and 46.0% of PG subjects who knew Irish reported difficulty in "finding the right turn of phrase for exactly what they wanted to say in a particular situation". It must be added, however, that these percentages compare quite favourably with respondents' experience of other

second languages, and probably reflect the accepted practice of second language classrooms in general. Such classroom practice would also, of course, have been in no small measure affected by the demands of largely written public examinations and the generally aural/oral bias of the Irish language course books available. In these circumstances, respondents may have failed to develop communicative ability in Irish simply because it was not the perceived purpose of classroom activity, or was ignored because of the more pressing claims of other aims. While the Leaving Certificate examination, taken at the end of the post-primary cycle, has had an oral component in Irish since 1960, it must be admitted that reading aloud, for example, constitutes part of this.

Before leaving this section on learners' formal experience of Irish, there is another point to be considered, particularly in relation to the development of a course based on communicative principles. Learner-centred L2 materials chiefly provided by the real world, accompanied by problem-solving activities of the information-retrieval/information-gap variety, seek primarily to promote learner independence. Communicative interdependence, however, is also necessary between the individual learner and others, whether other learners or speakers of the target language. For the self-instructor this means being directed through the materials to opportunities for language use. For the class-learner it may involve group or pair work. For both teacher and course book, however, it necessarily entails a change of emphasis in the traditional conception of their function. Neither can ultimately control the "processes inside the learner", his "syllabus for learning". They must rather assume managerial and facilitative, even counselling roles. Paradoxically, it may be more difficult for the learner, whether self-instructor or class-learner, to accept fully this new delimitation of reciprocal roles, initially at any rate. Little et al. (1984) offer a relatively clear picture of potential learners' previous formal experience: a language classroom that was teacher- dominated, with the majority of pupil participation teacher-controlled and directed mainly towards convergent activities. It would not be an untenable generalization to say that this type of pupil-teacher interaction is predominant in most post-primary schools, and not only in Ireland. The constraining effects of teacher language on pupil language (and possibly pupil learning) have been described by Barnes (1976), Stubbs and Delamont (1976), Widdowson (1978) and others, as have the unnatural communicative procedures whereby pupils answer questions to which the teacher/questioner already knows the answers. In the traditional language classroom normal discourse rules are constantly bent, to say the least, as pupils are for example encouraged to answer in complete sentences rather than words or phrases. The passive answering role to which pupils are assigned also allows them only one type of dialogue participation. Studies such as the ORACLE Report (Galton et al. 1980) show how the "progressive" classroom, where discovery and discussion might be thought to be at a premium, have tended more often (because of class size among other factors) to be dominated by largely "managerial" talk by the

teacher (not to be confused with the management of learning activities). Even with pre-school children, Jerome Bruner's Oxfordshire study showed this to be the case, although the leaders of groups were convinced otherwise about their own verbal interactions with the children (Bruner 1980). The level of teacher questioning has been found to be mostly of the factual kind, although this of course depends also on teaching style (Galton et al. 1980). Pupil-teacher interaction (answering apart) is extremely rare, as is pupil-pupil interaction (except perhaps of the disruptive variety). The "knowledge is control" syndrome is very prevalent in educational institutions generally, and the social roles of the participants are reflected in their uses of language.

To summarize, then: for the majority of our potential adult learners previous experience of learning Irish will have been school-based, and generally of the "learn now for use later" variety. It is interesting to note, however, that in the CLCS survey those respondents who had experience of Irish as a medium of communication - whether by living among native speakers in the Gaeltacht, or by being taught parts of the school curriculum through the medium of Irish, or merely by being exposed to a greater than average variety of Irish learning materials - generally reported less difficulty with all four language skills (Little et al. 1984: 65ff.).

It is also typical of the position of Irish generally that, while the school/curriculum profile just described had provided the learning experience of the majority of survey respondents, there were still some who had experienced Irish in other contexts, the home for example. This is, of course, a factor which is reflected in the total picture of Irish as a minority language, to which we now turn.

3 THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC REALITY OF IRISH

The current position of Irish is not easy to summarize, involving as it does not only the usual criterion for measurement - numbers and distribution of speakers - but a complex of beliefs, attitudes, and values, interrelating with ability, use, and presence or absence of opportunities for use. From census findings (which do not distinguish between competence and use), various reports and surveys, as well as some unpublished materials, one could make the following assertions with some confidence:

(i) the ethnic, symbolic, cultural value of the Irish language is important to the majority of the population;

(ii) thus while most people find difficulty in imagining the future viability of the language, they favour measures designed to support Irish, especially in the public domain (government, education, the public service), the

Gaeltacht areas, and bilingual policies generally;

(iii) extreme views, whether for or against the language, are weakening, and more liberal attitudes are gaining ground.

It is generally accepted that approximately 5% of the total population have Irish as home and/or community language, 10-12% more have high competence, 30% medium competence, and 30% some knowledge of the language.

While Ireland is a bilingual country, it does not have two speech communities. The use of Irish is not territorially based since Irish speakers are found dispersed throughout the population, whether Gaeltacht inhabitants, Gaeltacht inhabitants who have moved to other areas, or "speakers by choice" whose first language may have been English. In addition, while the population in the Gaeltacht areas was until recently diminishing rapidly, this loss was to some extent offset by the numbers of competent speakers being produced through the educational system (although, of course, this competence had little outlet for use, and recent reports indicate some weakening in this area due to a complex of factors outside the scope of this paper). The recent increases in Gaeltacht population are in fact mostly English-speakers.

Government policy since the foundation of the State has moved from replacement through restoration/revival to bilingualism. Irish has been and is encouraged and promoted, with varying degrees of enthusiasm and success, in all public domains. The result is that while a diglossic pattern may be observed in core Gaeltacht areas, with clear functional differentiation for both languages, no such clarity exists generally. There is no area of life in which either language cannot be used, but English tends to be predominant. With Irish then as the (to some extent) hidden language, learners have to be helped to seek it out and choices have to be made as to what constitutes authentic materials. A corollary of this, of course, is that an ideological position is inevitably being taken with regard to language maintenance. We should also point out that many of the possibilities for language use arise from a variety of language promotion activities.

Another point in relation to potential learners arises from what may be described as the courtesy/shame norms operating in the bilingual situation in Ireland. According to the CLAR Report (1975) and Ó Riagáin and Ó Gliasáin (1984), a majority of people do not like speaking Irish when others without Irish are present. In fact the presence of <u>one</u> English-speaker is sufficient to cause language switch in any group. For this reason also people report themselves as unwilling to initiate conversation in Irish. Again, people are hesitant about speaking Irish to those whom they know to have superior competence to their own. In fact, a fairly low tolerance of learners exists, perhaps produced by the bias towards over-use of the Monitor (to use Krashen's term)

encouraged by the type of school background described above. This is not to say that a large and cheerful band of Monitor under-users does not also exist, who are extremely good communicators, very fluent and exhibiting varying degrees of linguistic inaccuracy - they are characterized as possessing "Gaeilge líofa lofa" ("awful fluent Irish") and tend to be predominantly urban. From the perspective of the communicative approach, confident use of interlanguage is devoutly to be wished for. However, one must also recognize the problems that arise from learners not being able to progress beyond such a stage in the bilingual situation we have described, where in most interactions both interlocutors have both languages and if communication in Irish becomes difficult English is immediately resorted to. Accordingly repair techniques and compensation strategies need to be included at all levels of learning materials, as well as pointers towards management of discourse.

Finally, while a written standard and spelling norms have been established, there is no standard spoken variety of Irish, unless one accepts the lexical variants chosen by the compilers of the latest Irish-English dictionary as indicating normative choice from among the three main dialectal varieties.

At the end of this section it is perhaps easier to see why, despite the presence of Irish in the world outside school, school learning did not have as its immediate goal any link-up with the world of Irish in use. A communicative course, however, particularly one for adults, is based on the premise that this link-up is precisely what should occur - learning now for use now; which brings us to the third section of the paper.

4 LEARNERS AS POTENTIAL USERS

Among respondents to the CLCS survey (Little et al. 1984), those who knew Irish but said they would like to know it better had generally begun learning the language at primary school. They also tended, however, to have learned or had contact with Irish in other ways: extra-school factors such as personal contact with the language through home, friends/acquaintances, and use of printed and electronic media were prominent.

UGs especially tended to have experienced the language as a medium of instruction. Not surprisingly, academic success in Irish seems to have produced a positive attitude towards learning the language further (see CLAR 1975: academic attainment, positive attitudes, and use all correlate strongly). Again, in general terms, respondents wishing to improve their competence in the language assessed themselves more favourably than others with regard to the four language skills - perhaps another indication of successful learning providing some of the motivation for further learning.

By comparison with the range of reasons given for wanting a

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better knowledge of languages other than Irish, the spread of reasons given in respect of Irish was quite narrow, the cultural importance of the Irish language being the reason given most prominence. Other purposes referred to by these respondents included (in descending order of frequency) travel/holidays, a general liking for the language, and - particularly among PGs - literature, career, and general conversation. Cultural reasons were also prominent among the reasons why the few respondents who did not know Irish but said they would like to know the language, although PGs in this group also gave career reasons. Little et al. 1984) comment thus on these findings:

> It seems that among those who already knew Irish, an interest in further learning of the language was likely to be accompanied by a commitment to its cultural importance; since reasons associated with the use of the language as a medium of communication figure only marginally the emphasis seems likely to fall on past rather than present culture. (Little et al. 1984: 182f.)

Clearly future expectations will be coloured by past experience, which (as reported) seems to have dwelt excessively on the cultural past, with heavy use of texts, and little reference to the actual communicative possibilities which could have been exploited and which, if exploited in new learning experiences, could effectively link past and present culture.

From the point of view of course design, it is particularly interesting to note respondents' answers to the section of the CLCS survey questionnaire dealing with the circumstances in which they envisaged actually using the language. No response at all was given by 50% of UGs and 70% of PGs who knew Irish but said they would like to know it better (a much higher rate of non-response than for the other second/foreign languages of the school curriculum). While, as the report suggests (Little et al. 1984: 185), perhaps they "could not think of any realistic circumstances in which they might use Irish", this high "no response" rate for third-level students could also indicate an identification of Irish primarily with the domain of education, reflecting the conditions created by the State's efforts in language planning. (Other reports, such as CLAR (1975) and Hilliard's report (1981) on Gael Linn intensive courses, give prominence to education-related activities like helping children with their homework among the main circumstances in which learners envisage using their Irish.) For purposes of course planning it is also worth noting (from Hilliard's 1981 report) that increased participation in language promotion activities is a feature of post-Irish course use.

Finally, while approximately one third of respondents could envisage themselves using Irish "now and in the future", approximately two thirds gave no response under this head, indicating perhaps their perception that they were less likely to be in a position to use Irish than to use other second/foreign languages (Little et al. 1984: 186).

PY AVAILABLE

5 CONCLUSION

These then constitute some of the issues that we have had to keep in mind in devising communicative course materials for adult learners of Irish.

From the profile of potential users of Irish course materials that emerged from the CLCS survey, it was clear that any learning resources developed would have to provide for a wide range of expectations, abilities, learning styles and methodological preferences. While, for example, some potential learners could not easily envisage circumstances for productive use of their competence, others wished to develop their conversational ability to the extent of open-ended use at home or with friends. For the majority of learners access to the culture had high value. Because many learners would apparently reject solely self-instructional materials, the same course would have to be suitable for use independently and/or in a classroom.

Deciding that a multi-media format would be the most appropriate for the intended course was relatively simple. Clearly, however, in order to reach the goals of target repertoires very broadly specified earlier, what was contained within that format would have to be based on a view of language acquisition/learning that would accommodate such heterogeneity and simultaneously ensure that the linguistic expectations of all the learners would be met. Appropriate choices would have to be made to enable learners not only to acquire various linguistic competencies but also to deploy those competencies in the ways they desired, and to encompass all this in a manner that would allow both individual and class-based exploitation of materials and resources.

Adult learners approaching any course do so from choice. They are motivated, initially at any rate, by reasonably clear reasons for wishing to get involved in a course of language learning. The "learn now for use later" approach is the surest recipe for drop-out among this target group (but perhaps among any group of adult language learners?). Adult learners know reasonably well what they want, and they want it now. However, because of their previous learning experience and their level of cognitive development they may need to approach language learning in particular ways.

For adults a communicative course in a minority language such as Irish requires that the material for learning in a formal context be chosen because it arises out of the opportunities for use that do exist, so that in equipping the learner to use what he has learned in informal contexts (where natural acquisition can proceed), it effectively directs him to those contexts.

I end with this thought. Egan (1984: 89f.) argues that one of the possible values to the individual of learning a second language, even to quite a low level of competence, lies in the simultaneous acquisition of a metalinguistic awareness which brings the learner "to a deeper understanding of [the] essence

[of language]". A communicative approach to the learning of Irish, whether in the educational system or through courses for adults, could accomplish this and much more by emphasizing transmission of meaning, whether via the culture of the past or via the culture of the present. The communicative approach to second/foreign language teaching/learning, current thinking on first language teaching/learning, and the possibilities inherent in a bilingual educational system of the two-variety type found in Ireland (second language as school subject, second language as medium of instruction) are all points along the same continuum. If one of the aims of the education system is extension of the learner's linguistic repertoire in first and second languages, the totality of communication can be expressed diagrammatically thus:

Totality of Communication: L1 and L2

Teacher as language user	ORACY	LITERACY	Pupil as language user
	Listening	Reading	
	Speaking	Writing	

Within this framework choices can be made by teacher and/or pupil regarding the language to be used for communication in the different areas of the curriculum (see Lapkin 1978/9).

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THE ACQUISITION OF RELATIVE CLAUSES IN A FORMAL AND IN AN INFORMAL SETTING: FURTHER EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF THE MARKEDNESS HYPOTHESIS

Linguistic markedness by itself (Hyltenstam 1978, 1981; Rutherford 1982) or in combination with other factors such as L1 transfer (Eckman 1977; Zobl 1984) has recently been suggested as a possible explanation for interlanguage (IL) development. A necessary prerequisite for the notion to apply to linguistic phenomena is a binary opposition. Within a pair of conjugated elements bound in an asymmetrical and hierarchical relationship (Waugh 1982: 299) one is unmarked and the other marked. The unmarked member is the more basic, the more neutral or central one in the opposition. It is the element which possesses fewer features, conveys less information and is, so to speak, "included" or "implied" in the marked one. The marked member, on the other hand, is the less basic or central one. It is characterized by a greater number of features, thus conveying more information, and it "includes" or "implies" the unmarked member. In addition to a single binary opposition, linguistic phenomena can interact in a series of binary oppositions. We then speak of degrees or of a scale of markedness: B is more marked than A but less marked than C.

Whereas the concept was originally conceived as applicable within the domain of single linguistic systems (Trubetzkoy 1939, Jakobson 1939), it was later expanded so as to apply to phenomena whose analysis involves cross-linguistic comparisons (Greenberg 1966). This is the field of typological markedness (TM); it makes use of criteria such as universal implications and world language distributions and it overlaps with considerations of surface structure universals (Greenberg 1963).

It is exactly within the framework of TM that research on the relationship between second language acquisition (SLA) and markedness has been mostly conducted (Hyltenstam 1981, Gass 1979, Eckman 1977; Zobl, to appear). In particular, the Accessibility Hierarchy (AH) (Keenan and Comrie 1977, Comrie and Keenan 1979) for relative clause (RC) formation has been used to predict the order of acquisition of relative clauses in a second language (Gass 1979, Hyltenstam 1981, Schachter 1974).

According to the AH there is a universal order in which NP positions - i.e. grammatical functions - can be relativized in natural languages. The order is as follows:

Subject (S) > Direct Object (DO) > Indirect Object (IO) > Oblique Object (= Object of Preposition) (OO) > Genitive (G) > Object of Comparison (OC) (1)

Thus the S is more accessible to relativization than the DO, the DO is more accessible than the IO, and so on down the hierarchy in such a way as to include the OO, the G, and finally the OC. While the S NP position is relativizable in all languages, the other NP positions are not. More specifically, the order according to which different languages relativize the NP is implicational on the basis of the hierarchy proposed. For example, if a language can relativize the IO, then it will also relativize the DO and the S but not necessarily the other categories which are of lower accessibility.

The AH can obviously be interpreted as an implicational scale of markedness, with the S and the OC being respectively the least and the most marked NP positions on the scale.

Hyltenstam (1981), researching the acquisition of Swedish relative clauses by speakers of different mother tongues, used such an implicational scale. The findings of his investigation show an acquisitional sequence which strongly agrees with the AH. However, Hyltenstam did not investigate whether the AH could be used as a predictor of the acquisition sequence in a second language with respect to properly formed relative clauses in Swedish. Instead he studied the pattern of pronoun retention versus pronoun deletion in the embedded clause (2). Such a research approach was chosen on the basis of Keenan and Comrie's (1977) finding that in natural languages the tendency to form relative clauses with pronoun retention increases as the AH is descended (3). Hyltenstam's results showed that pronoun deletion in his learners' IL occurred in an order corresponding in the main to that predicted by the AH. Hyltenstam, moreover, found that pronoun retention was used by subjects belonging to all the different language groups. This was despite the fact that the learners' mother tongues included languages which do not allow this RC formation strategy and that in Swedish itself pronoun retention is never used.

PURPOSE OF PRESENT STUDY

The purpose of the present study is to test the hypothesis that the acquisition of English relative clauses by Italian speakers proceeds from unmarked to marked in the order predicted by the AH and in agreement with Hyltenstam's (1981) findings about the acquisition of Swedish relative clauses by speakers of different native languages.

The main criterion used for deciding on the acquisition versus non-acquisition of relativization in the various NP positions is minus/plus the copy (either pronoun or noun) (4) in the relative clause (5). Both Standard English and Standard Italian do not allow the RC forming strategy of pronoun retention. Thus in Hyltenstam's terms (1981) we have a perfect TL-NL pair. Both languages are highly marked in respect of the pattern of pronoun deletion/pronoun retention in RC formation. If retention appears

in the learners' IL, it cannot be easily traced back to either language (6). We are then in a better position to suggest that IL syntax is, in its initial and basic form, an independent system.

The second aim of the present investigation is to compare the acquisitional development of RC formation in tutored versus untutored learners. We hypothesize that the context of learning (i.e. formal as opposed to informal) will not influence the actual developmental sequence in the acquisition of relative clauses in English by Italian speakers. Yet formal learning is hypothesized to promote the acquisition and use of more marked structures.

PROCEDURE

Subjects

Two groups of learners were chosen for this cross-sectional study of the acquisition of relative clauses by Italian speakers. The first group was composed of 48 Italian high school students. Their age ranged from 14 to 18. The number of years they had been studying English ranged from 2 to 7. All the subjects belonging to this group spoke Standard Italian. They came for the most part from middle class families and therefore their exposure to a local dialect was presumably quite limited. Their school is a very academic type of high school. Consequently they had great familiarity with the formal registers of their mother tongue and were heavily exposed to formal English through the study of British literature and, more generally, through a substantial input of written language.

The second group was composed of 38 Italian workers (waiters for the most part). The subjects belonging to this second group had had only minimal formal instruction or none in English. They had been exposed to the language naturally, while at work, at home or during recreation. They had had very little contact with speakers of other foreign languages in Britain. Their social and working environment was thus mainly made up of a combination of Italian and English, with a great predominance of Italian. Their age ranged from 19 to 50. They had been in Britain from a minimum of 3 months to a maximum of 25 years. I tried to gather informants who spoke Standard Italian or a regional variety as similar as possible to the standard. About half of the subjects said that they used both Standard Italian and the dialect spoken in their native area, but none of them claimed that they had learned the dialect as their mother tongue. Uncertainty remains on the degree to which the dialect was a potential influence in each learner's developing IL. Given that their level of education was generally quite low - only 13 of them had gone to secondary school and of these 13, 12 attended a training college - it was assumed that these untutored learners' exposure to the

formal registers of Standard Italian was not as extensive as for the tutored learners. For similar reasons and also on account of their semi-skilled occupation it was assumed that their exposure to the more formal registers of English was quite limited.

Elicitation material and elicitation technique

Relative clauses were elicited orally, using the pictorial material that Hyltenstam (1981) devised in his study of the acquisiton of Swedish relative clauses by second language learners (7). The material consisted of six sets of pictures, one set for each NP position on the AH. The relative is elicited by asking the learners about the identity of a given numbered character. All eight characters appearing in each set of pictures are uniquely defined. For example, on the page pertaining to the S position, No.7 is the girl who is running. No.6 is the man who is running, No.3 is the girl who is singing, and so on for each of the remaining characters in this set. The experimenter, then, simply asks questions such as "Who is No.6?", the expected answer being "No.6 is the man who is running".

The interview, which was audio-taped, lasted about 15 minutes. The informant was asked to look at the pictures and was given an example before the actual interview started. Each NP position was elicited five times. Prompts were frequently supplied by the experimenter in the course of the interview, especially when trying to elicit the lowest positions on the hierarchy. A general tendency to relativize on the S, the least marked position, even when the learner was asked to relativize on other positions, was noticed (8).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were analysed by means of implicational (Guttman) scaling. This statistical technique is used to demonstrate implicational ordering of linguistic features. Employed first in sociolinguistic studies of variation (De Camp 1968, 1971), it has been successfully introduced into SLA research (Andersen 1978, Hyltenstam 1977). Such a technique enables us to test the hypothesis that the acquisitional order of certain structures is not random but implicational.

The two groups' results conformed to the hypothesized implicational sequence. The Guttman scaling procedure yielded in both cases statistically significant results. (Coefficient of reproducibility = .9583 and coefficient of scalability = .8182 for the formal group; coefficient of reproducibility = .9561 and coefficient of scalability = .7143 for the informal group, all at 80% criterion.) Relativization on the S appears to be mastered before relativization on the DO, relativization on the DO before relativization on the IO, and so on down to the last NP positions on the AH (Tables 1 and 2). The acquisitional sequence seems

TABLE 1

Implicational scale showing the order of acquisition of English relative clauses by Italian learners. Formal group

Coefficient of reproducibility = .9583
Coefficient of scalability = .8182

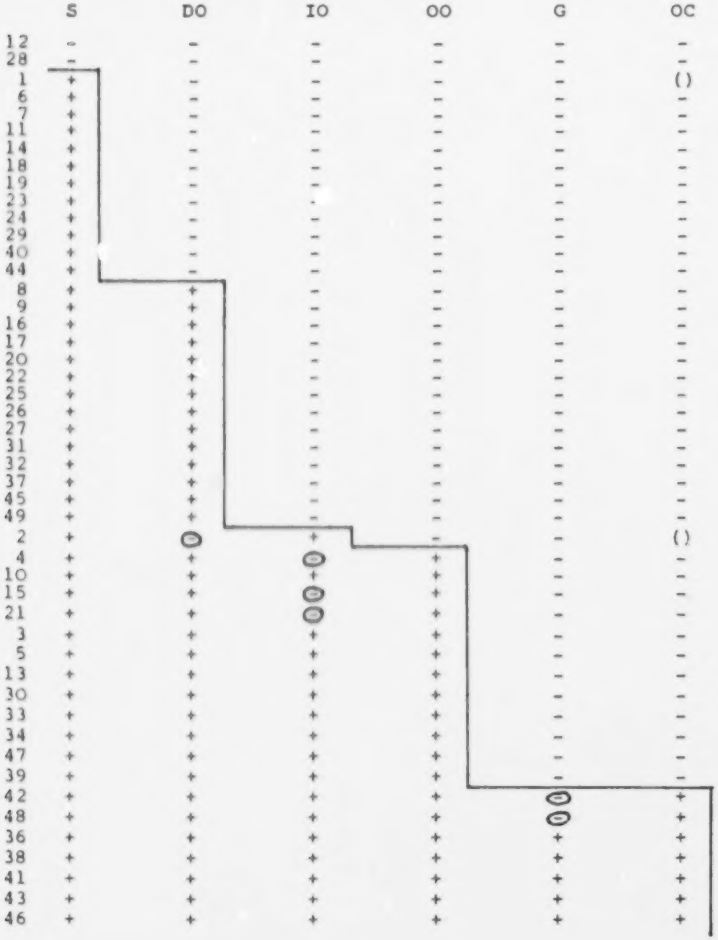

TABLE 2

Implicational scale showing the order of acquisition of English relative clauses by Italian learners. Informal group

Coefficient of reproducibility = .9561
Coefficient of scalability = .7143

	S	DO	IO	OO	G	OC
50	+	-	-	-	-	-
52	+	-	-	-	-	-
54	+	-	-	-	-	-
55	+	-	-	-	-	-
58	+	-	-	-	-	-
59	+	-	-	-	-	-
73	+	-	-	-	-	-
76	+	-	-	-	-	-
77	+	-	-	-	-	-
81	+	-	-	-	-	-
83	+	-	-	-	-	-
85	+	-	-	-	-	-
86	+	-	-	-	-	-
53	+	+	-	-	-	-
56	+	+	-	-	-	-
57	+	+	-	-	-	-
61	+	+	-	-	-	-
63	+	+	-	-	-	-
64	+	+	-	-	-	-
66	+	+	-	-	-	-
68	+	+	-	-	-	-
71	+	+	-	-	-	-
72	+	+	-	-	-	-
79	+	+	-	-	-	-
84	+	+	-	-	-	-
69	+	+	+	-	-	-
67	+	⊖	+	-	-	-
74	+	+	+	-	-	-
88	+	+	+	-	-	-
60	+	+	+	+	-	-
70	+	+	+	+	-	-
51	+	+	⊖	+	-	-
62	+	+	⊖	+	-	-
65	+	+	⊖	+	-	-
75	+	+	+	+	-	-
80	+	+	+	+	-	-
87	+	+	+	+	-	-
82	+	+	+	+	⊖	+

thus to follow the universal pattern, starting with the most unmarked category and ending with the most marked one.

Yet the inversion of the IO and the OO on the one hand and the G and the OC on the other yields reproducibility and scalability figures which are equally significant for both groups or, in fact, even higher (Table 3). These findings are in agreement

TABLE 3

Coefficient of reproducibility (significant when > .9) and coefficient of scalability (significant when > .6) according to the various orderings of the NP positions.

	Formal group		Informal group	
	C. rep.	C. scal.	C. rep.	C. scal.
S DO IO OO G OC	.9583	.8182	.9561	.7143
S DO OO IO G OC	.9792	.9091	.9561	.7143
S DO IO OO OC G	.9722	.8788	.9649	.7714

with Hyltenstam's (1981) results. He too found that by inverting these two pairs the resulting statistical figures would be the same as those pertaining to the predicted order or would become higher. When looking more carefully at the individual performance in our groups we notice that 82.2% of the learners do not differentiate between the IO and the OO; they either delete the copy in both positions or retain it. The pattern exhibited by those who do differentiate is not univocal: five favour the IO over the OO and six favour the OO over the IO. Similarly, in the case of the G and the OC only 3.5% of the learners distinguish between the two positions, and those who do, happen to master the OC before the G. These findings are supported by the results of a written sentence-combination task administered to the formal group. The scores organized implicationally yield a significant scale which mirrors the universal sequence as predicted by the AH (coefficient of reproducibility = .9184, coefficient of scalability = .7176). Moreover, the apparent inconsistencies with the AH noticed in the oral task emerged in the written task as well. Only 6.3% of the students mastered one member of the pair IO-OO before the other and no clear favouring of the G is evident (five favour the G whereas six favour the OC).

Let us consider some linguistic factors which may be at the origin of the merging of the two categories IO and OO in the learners' English IL. As noticed by Keenan and Comrie (1977), indirect objects do not have a clear typological status in terms of RC formation; i.e. they tend to behave like either direct objects or objects of preposition. From a more general point of view, indirect objects are widely realized as adverbs of movement

(see Brown and Miller (1982) for a brief discussion). English, in fact, is a typical example of a language where prepositional indirect objects, by sharing semantic and syntactic features with directional locatives, are not distinguishable from other oblique objects. This may be why indirect objects are treated as simple objects of preposition even by L2 learners of English.

Preposition stranding in both IO and OO English relatives could also be at the origin of the merging of the two NP positions in the learners' IL. During the elicitation of both grammatical functions the subjects were asked to produce a relative with preposition stranding, as for example "No.6 is the man the dog is giving the ball to". Preposition stranding is, from the point of view of TM, an extremely rare phenomenon whose diffusion seems to be limited to the Indo-European family (van Riemsdijk 1978). It could thus be a main factor in determining the degree of complexity of the two structures, and consequently their assimilation in learners' speech.

Similarly, either the lack of differentiation between the G and the OC or the alternation of the two positions in the sequence of acquisition can be explained by attributing their origin to features of English syntax. The comparative conjunction "than" behaves very similarly to a preposition. Moreover, the elicitation of the OC during the interview mirrored the elicitation of the IO and the OO: the experimenter prompted the subject so as to have him place "than" at the end of the relative. It does not seem unreasonable then to postulate that in the learners' IL the three functions are represented as having a common denominator: stranding. Consequently, the G relative construction - in which the role of the head noun in the relative clause is case marked by the relative pronoun rather than by a preposition - will be put aside and will assume, at times at least, the lowest position on the acquisitional hierarchy. This tendency to acquire G relatives last has already been noticed by Hawkins and Keenan (1974) in a study based on the results of a repetition task administered to English-speaking children. Genitives were found to be the most difficult position to recall, whereas comparatives were assimilated to OO relatives. Preposition stranding was given as the explanation of these findings.

So far we have considered the results which are shared by both groups and which support the hypothesis that context of learning bears no influence on the acquisitional sequence of relative clauses in English. Both groups exhibit the same implicational order of acquisition which generally agrees with the AH and with Hyltenstam's findings. Both groups show the same "inconsistencies" with the hierarchy and tend either not to differentiate or to alternate the positions of the two pairs IO-OO and G-OC. Also, both groups provide copies when the formation of the correct relative is not achieved. Yet the type of retention strategy in RC formation varies in the two groups. While the formal group makes use of the strategy of pronoun retention 78% of the times an ungrammatical relative clause is produced, the informal group uses it to a considerably lesser extent, that is

44.5%. Conversely, the informal group makes quite a frequent use of the strategy of noun retention. Learners belonging to this group produce utterances such as *"No.4 is the woman who the dog is looking at the woman" 44.2% of the times a well-formed relative is not supplied. Among formal learners, on the other hand, noun copies are employed only 10.1% of the time. A t-test applied to the individual scores of the two groups in terms of noun retention shows that the two groups differ significantly in their use of this strategy ($t = 3.7$, $p < .001$). Thus informal learners, with their greater tendency to retain a full NP rather than a pro-form, appear to favour a much more basic and unmarked strategy. We may wonder in fact whether in such utterances with full noun phrases any transformation at all has taken place. It may simply be a case of clause juxtaposition, where "who" is used as a conjunction.

As for the overall level reached, the two groups do not differ significantly ($t = 1.35$, $p > .05$). However, this result should be interpreted with great care since the two groups are obviously not strictly comparable in terms of quantity of exposure to the language. Despite the apparent similarity between the two groups as regards their overall achievement, a Fisher's exact test was applied to the scores relative to the G and the OC in order to test the initial hypothesis that formal learners proceed to the most marked position on the AH while informal learners do not. The results of the test show that the difference between the two groups is significant for the G ($p = .05$) but just fails to be so for the OC ($p = .06$).

The use of more marked features on the part of the formal learners should not be interpreted simply as evidence that the explicit teaching of a language in itself promotes the acquisition of a fully-fledged language, whereas the lack of it does not. Social and cultural factors obviously play an important part in the whole picture. The linguistic input the two groups received was dramatically different. The Italian high school students were exposed mainly to written and literary English, while the Italian workers were primarily exposed to the informal registers of their second language. The concentration of marked structures, and relative clauses in particular, differs greatly in the two input types. Yet if input can furnish a possible explanation as to why formal learners proceed to the lowest positions on the AH while informal learners do not, it cannot explain the different proportions in the use of RC formation strategies in the two groups. No type of input includes utterances such as "No.5 is the boy who the dog is giving the ball to the boy", and no native language (i.e. Standard Italian or dialect) provides a model for such utterances. Similarly, as far as the formal group is concerned, no teaching material or teacher's talk included relative clauses with pronoun copies and yet these constitute 78% of the ungrammatical utterances produced by tutored learners. Input again seems to be insufficient in explaining all aspects of language acquisition.

CONCLUSIONS

The results obtained in this study support the general hypothesis that SLA progresses from unmarked to marked both in terms of the order in which the various TL structures are mastered and in terms of the different strategies employed in the process of acquisition. The AH suggested by Keenan and Comrie (1977) and Comrie and Keenan (1979) in its original form is a statistically valid predictor of the acquisitional sequence of RC formation in English. Yet if from a general point of view the AH provides an adequate framework for the analysis of the acquisition sequence, at a finer level consideration of more "local" factors (i.e. pertaining to English in this case) and of typological variation seems to be necessary to account for some of the aspects of learners' speech.

Moreover, the learning setting - formal or informal - does not seem to influence the acquisitional ordering in which the syntactic structure investigated here develops in the learners' speech. The slight difference between the positions on the AH reached by the two groups and the more prominent use of unmarked RC formation strategies exhibited by the informal group suggest that input plays some part in determining the level of elaboration achieved in a second language. Furthermore, the purpose for which a language is used - in this case academic achievement versus immediate communication - can influence how far up on the developmental continuum learners commence when they start learning a second language as well as how long they are allowed to stay at a given stage.

NOTES

(1) Here are examples of the different categories:

S The woman who came
DO The woman who I phoned
IO The woman who I was talking to
OO The friend who I went to the cinema with
G The woman whose children you met
OC The woman who I am older than

(2) Examples of relative clauses with pronoun retention (ungrammatical in Standard English) are:

*The girl who John kissed her
*The girl who John talked to her

Pronoun deletion, on the contrary, yields relatives which are grammatical in English:

The girl who John kissed/talked to

(3) The movement from NP positions which are high on the AH to NP positions which are low corresponds to a gradual increase in syntactic complexity. Thus the use of a pronoun copy facilitates the processing of otherwise cognitively demanding structures. The retention of the pronoun lets the more explicit deep structure representation emerge to the surface.

(4) *"The man who my father was talking to the man" (versus "The man my father was talking to") is an example of the use of the strategy of noun retention, unacceptable in English.

(5) There were a few other cases where the reply provided by the learner was scored as unacceptable. These included, first, the use of a co-ordinate clause (e.g. "No.5 is the man and the dog is biting him") instead of a relative clause (e.g. "... who the dog is biting"); second, the relativization of a position of higher accessibility when one of lower accessibility was required (e.g. "No.2 is the woman who is looking at the dog" instead of the expected "No.2 is the woman who the dog is looking at"). It should be noted that in these cases the reply was scored as incorrect only when the learner repeatedly failed to modify his response despite the prompting of the experimenter.

(6) We are aware of the possible limitations of such a statement. Clearly there are non-standard varieties of both English and Italian which allow pronoun copies in RC formation. Yet the results of this investigation (see following sections) indicate that the possible influence of those varieties of the TL or of the NL cannot explain many aspects of the learners' IL relative clauses.

(7) It is worth reporting that the original plan to have a written task as well as an oral one for both groups had to be abandoned because of the informal learners' unwillingness to perform on the more formal test.

(8) Six native English speakers as well were interviewed using Hyltenstam's elicitation material. They all produced the expected structures even if some prompting was necessary at times. No pronoun retention or noun retention was ever used.

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PATTERNS OF READING IN L1 AND L2

1 INTRODUCTORY

The investigation described in this paper was undertaken for an M.Litt. thesis on L2 reading as compared with L1 reading, prompted by the situation of English language teaching in Peru. Until recently the ultimate aim of second-level foreign language teaching programmes in Peru was to train students in mastering the four language skills. However, after a needs analysis focussed on objectives, curricula, resources and methods of assessment, it was decided that at this level the chief language skill to be developed should be reading comprehension. Except in centres of tourism like Cuzco and Arequipa the average Peruvian student in state secondary schools has little or no chance to be in contact with native oral English, whether by meeting native speakers of English or in any other way.

In natural language use the four skills tend to be interrelated, so that it is almost impossible to separate them from one another. The four skills are not realized in exactly the same way in all languages; but the communicative purpose of language is universal, so that even in languages without a written form the skills of reading and writing are potentially present in the language itself and in the language users. Thus there seems to be sufficient common ground between languages to exploit skills in L1 when learning skills in L2. In other words, where the L2 learner needs to concentrate (for example) on developing the reading skill in L2, he could benefit in terms of a communicative purpose for reading by connecting his L2 reading to other communicative activities in L1.

Although much less research has been done on reading in L2 than on reading in L1, a number of interesting studies have recently been undertaken from a psycholinguistic perspective; and as Cohen (1982) notes, mentalistic studies have helped to identify some of the problems in reading. Hosenfeld (1977) demonstrated that successful and unsuccessful readers use different types of strategies. She discovered that good readers tend to rely much more on context, read broader chunks, and skip unimportant words. Poor readers, on the other hand, give priority in their problem-solving system to using a glossary or dictionary immediately they come across a word they do not know; they also tend to read smaller chunks word by word and tend to forget the whole message of the text rather easily. In another study Hosenfeld (1979) used think-aloud techniques to demonstrate how a poor reader improved his reading by using more effective reading strategies. Cohen (1982) reports on a study by van Parreren and Schouten-van Parreren (1981) which elicited think-aloud data to show how the successful contextual guesser derives meaning from

unknown words he encounters while reading.

These studies and others following a similar line of enquiry have shown that mentalistic research is capable of yielding interesting and illuminating results. The research reported in this paper was planned on this basis, and was motivated by an interest in the differences and similarities between L1 and L2 reading strategies.

2 DESIGN OF THE EXPERIMENT

Objectives

- Compare how reading habits and strategies differ as between L1 and L2.
- Analyse to what extent these differences could reflect teaching method.

Methodology

- The data were to be collected through a questionnaire and in self-report sessions making use of mentalistic measures (Cohen 1982, Hosenfeld 1979).

Subjects

- In March 1983 ten subjects were recruited voluntarily from the second and third years of the honours course in Spanish at Trinity College, Dublin. A member of the academic staff confirmed that these ten subjects had a level of proficiency in Spanish that was above intermediate.

Instruments

- A 50-item questionnaire divided into four sections: reading habits in L1, reading habits in L2, a comparison of reading in L1 and L2, and subjects' learning experience of L2.
- Four reading texts, each of approximately 250 words. They were extracted from The Irish Journal of Environmental Sciences. Two were photocopies of the original in English and two were typewritten translations into Spanish done by the researcher (a native speaker of Spanish).

Sessions

- There was a preliminary session in which it was explained to all the subjects what the experiment was about and how it was to be conducted, in three sessions of approximately an hour each on different days.

- Session I: Subjects filled in the questionnaire and watched a ten-minute video in which a member of the academic staff of the Centre for Language and Communication Studies and the researcher appear individually doing a "think-aloud" self-report while reading two different texts.

- Session II: All subjects self-reported on two texts, one in English and the other in Spanish, in a language laboratory. There was no intervention by the researcher, though she was present throughout the session. All self-reports were tape-recorded. After this session subjects were given a check-list of points that they might have a chance to report on in the last session and two printed samples of the script of an interview concerning similar experiments making use of introspection.

- Session III: Each subject individually self-reported on two texts, one in English and the other in Spanish, in front of the researcher, who at times interrupted and acted as interviewer. All self-reports were tape-recorded.

3 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

3.1 Questionnaire

All the data from the questionnaires were put together. Then each item was classified under the following categories: general, reading materials, reading strategies, reading manner, language skills in Spanish, experience of learning Spanish.

3.1.1 General

Tables 1 and 2 show the distribution of the ten subjects according to age and sex and the number of languages they reported knowing other than English. In no case had Spanish been the first L2 learned in a formal context. All subjects except one (whose mother is a native speaker of Spanish) had started learning Spanish at second level.

TABLE 1 Distribution of subjects by age and sex

No. of subjects (N=10)	Age	No. of subjects (N=10)	Sex
5	20	7	F
3	21	3	M
2	22		

TABLE 2 Numbers and combinations of L2s reported by subjects

No. of subjects (N=10)	No. of L2s	Languages
1	2	French,Spanish,
8	3	All had French, Spanish; 5 had Irish; 2 had Italian; 1 had German
1	4	Irish, French, Spanish, Italian

3.1.2 Reading materials

Newspapers and magazines comprised the category of materials that subjects said they read with the highest frequency in English (4 very often, 5 often, 1 sometimes). For Spanish, by contrast, the frequency with which they reported they read this kind of material was much lower (1 very often, 6 sometimes, 3 rarely); this is to be expected since Spanish reading matter of this type is not readily available in Ireland. Predictably literary texts comprised the category that subjects reported reading with the highest frequency in Spanish (4 very often, 2 often, 4 sometimes). Specialist articles were read more frequently in English than in Spanish (English: 4 often, 3 sometimes, 2 rarely, 1 never; Spanish: 2 often, 2 sometimes, 4 rarely, 2 never). Material containing statistics was the category that subjects reported they read least often in both English and Spanish. This is supported by several comments that subjects made in the self-reports to the effect that they were out of touch with this type of material. However, surprisingly enough the majority of subjects did not consider "statistics" very hard or hard to read in English but normal (1 very hard, 1 hard, 6 normal, 2 very easy). But only one subject considered this type of material easy to read in Spanish (2 very hard, 3 hard, 4 normal, 1 easy).

As regards different aspects of reading, "unfamiliarity with the topic" and "understanding grammatical structures" were the two factors reported by five of the subjects to be the cause of difficulty in reading both languages, followed by "understanding charts, tables, etc." Clearly this latter aspect is often prominent in reading the type of material classified as "statistics", which subjects in general reported that they read very seldom. However, there is still some contradiction, with six subjects giving the reading of this material in English a difficulty rating of "normal".

3.1.3 Reading strategies

Five subjects reported that when reading in English they used a dictionary when they thought a word they did not know was important to the whole message of the text; three subjects reported that they used a dictionary just to make sure that what they thought the word meant was right; one subject said he used a dictionary every time he found a new word; and one subject said he used a dictionary whenever a word did not seem to be English.

Seven subjects reported that in reading Spanish they used a dictionary to make sure that what they thought a word meant was right. Four subjects who reported that they would trust their guess in English said that they would not behave in the same way in Spanish.

As expected, subjects reported using a dictionary very infrequently when reading for pleasure, whether in English or Spanish. The majority seemed to be more dependent on a dictionary when reading for detailed and specific information in both languages.

As regards ways in which subjects thought they could improve their reading in both languages, all ten said they were certain they improved their reading the more they read in Spanish, while only five subjects were certain that this was also the case in English. For reading in Spanish six subjects rated "learning how the same grammatical structure serves different purposes" as an "important" factor in improving their reading, and five subjects considered "learning vocabulary" to be "very important". For reading in English four subjects rated "learning different writers' ways of writing" as "important", three subjects rated "learning how the same grammatical structure served different purposes" as "important", and another three subjects rated "learning new vocabulary" as "important".

3.1.4 Reading manner

In general "forming the words in one's mind" was the predominant manner of reading that subjects reported in

respect of most types of reading materials in both English and Spanish, almost regardless of the purpose in reading. However, when reading for detailed information in Spanish, eight subjects reported that the "form the words silently with their lips, while only four subjects reported doing the same when reading in English for the same purpose. This response makes us suspect that certain teaching methods are responsible for establishing in learners' minds a close association between reading in L2 and reading aloud in L2. Some suppport for this suspicion was found in the self-report data, in comments like like "I have the feeling I have to pronounce every word in Spanish to see if I can actually pronounce it well" or (in response to the researcher's question "Why do you say that in Spanish you take in smaller words such as a, la, de, etc., which you do not think you even see in English?") "I learned Spanish speaking it rather than writing it, so putting accents and spelling I make myself notice them because I know it's going to help me in the long run". More generally these kinds of response may reflect teaching procedures that encourage learners to think of language as a sum of essentially isolated elements: letters making words, words making phrases, phrases making sentences, and so on. This view of text production has recently come in for severe criticism (see de Beaugrande and Dressler 1981).

Eight subjects reported that they were certain they changed their manner of reading in English when they encountered some comprehension difficulty, while 2 were uncertain whether they did so. Six subjects reported that they were aware of a change in their manner of reading when they encountered a difficulty in Spanish, three were uncertain, and one did not respond. The most commonly reported change in manner of reading was from "forming the words in one's mind" to "forming the words with one's lips"; in fewer cases subjects reported a change from "forming the words with one's lips" to "reading out loud". Most subjects explained that when they encountered a difficulty they would slow down and look at each word more closely in order to concentrate harder. One subject mentioned breaking the sentence in which the difficulty occurred into its component clauses.

3.1.5 Language skills in Spanish

Six subjects rated understanding speech in Spanish as "easy"; four subjects rated speaking Spanish as "easy"; and five subjects rated translating between English and Spanish as "hard".

Eight subjects rated understanding speech in Spanish as "very important"; five subjects rated speaking Spanish as "very important"; and seven subjects rated "reading" as "important".

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3.1.6 Experience of learning Spanish

None of the subjects had learned Spanish at primary level, but nine of them had learned Spanish at second level. One subject had started learning Spanish at third level. Taking second and third levels together, six subjects reported that "reading and writing" were the "dominant feature" in their learning of Spanish.

Six subjects reported that they had had reading practice at second level and eight reported that they had reading practice at third level. Taking second and third levels together, most subjects reported that the reading practice they had had was connected with "written comprehension exercises" and "written grammar exercises". As regards "reading material", subjects reported that it was mainly just their course book at second level, while at third level they also used newspapers and magazines.

3.2 Introspective data

The introspective data from the self-reports were transcribed. Then each instance in which subjects reported doing something during their reading was analysed in order to decide first whether or not it could be identified as a strategy and secondly, if it was a strategy, to what level it belonged - word, sentence or text. Although the researcher had a check-list of strategies that readers in general tend to use, the final classification of strategies was arrived at only after all 441 strategies in the data had been analysed and identified. In more than one case the same segment of data was considered to involve the use of two strategies simultaneously and was thus counted twice. Similarly, although the researcher tried to describe the specific type of strategy before assigning it to word, sentence or text level, there were a few cases in which for some reason the type of stategy could not be satisfactorily identified but the researcher was able to identify the level at which it should be categorized; these cases were assigned to the category "other". Table 3 shows the overall distribution of strategies: more strategies were reported and word level than at sentence level, and more were reported at sentence level than at text level. The

TABLE 3 Overall distribution of strategies according to levels (N=441)

Word level	Sentence level	Text level
0.41	0.31	0.28

predominance of word-level strategies may be due in part to the fact that the task subjects were asked to perform was unfamiliar and they found it easier to avoid remaining silent by focussing

on individual words.

The following types of strategy were identified at word level, labelled as follows: "etymology", "association with cognates", "word-formation", "use of context", "association with specific topic/register", "association with personal experience/memories", "use of dictionary", and "0 strategy". The strategy most frequently used at this level was "use of context", which accounted for 49 of the 183 word-level strategies identified (0.27). The second most frequently reported strategy was "association with cognates", accounting for 25 instances (0.14). "Association with specific topic/register" accounted for 24 instances (0.13) and "association with personal experience/memories" for 23 instances (0.12). There were 22 instances of "0 strategy" (0.12), where subjects stated that they had a difficulty with some word but then decided to go on. The strategy "word-formation" was used in 14 instances (0.08), and there were 2 instances each (0.01) of "etymology" and "use of dictionary". In addition there were 22 instances classified as "other" (0.11) which clearly belonged at word level but resisted easy categorization.

Of the 136 instances of strategies at sentence level the most frequently used was "judgement of fact/opinion", which occurred 27 times (0.20). There were 25 instances of "additional comment" (0.18), 21 instances of "redundancy" (0.15), and 14 instances each of "paraphrasing" and "inferring supporting detail" (0.10). "Direct translation" and "recognizing rhetorical function" each occurred 8 times (0.06). There were 6 instances of "understanding relations within the sentence" (0.04) and 3 instances of "0 strategy". In addition 10 instances were classified as "other" (0.07) because of the difficulty of identifying them as a specific type of strategy, even though they were clearly focussed on sentence level.

Of the 122 instances of strategies at text level, "prediction" accounted for 23 (0.19) and "relating to non-verbal mode" and "recognition of rhetorical function" accounted for 16 each (0.13). There were 13 instances each (0.11) of "recognition of redundancy of information" and "recognition of coherence"; 11 instances each (0.09) of "summarizing and synthesizing" and "recognition of main idea"; and 3 instances of "0 strategy" (0.02). In addition there were 16 instances classified as "other" (0.13).

If we look at the distribution of strategies according to levels subject by subject we find that only seven subjects reported more word-level strategies than sentence-level or text-level strategies, while two subjects reported more sentence-level strategies and one subject reported more text-level strategies (Table 4).

TABLE 4 Distribution of strategies by levels for each subject

Subject	Total strategies	Word level	Sentence level	Text level
1	57	0.44	0.33	0.23
2	50	0.22	0.50	0.28
3	39	0.54	0.23	0.23
4	52	0.63	0.15	0.21
5	53	0.32	0.24	0.43
6	31	0.55	0.16	0.29
7	27	0.52	0.15	0.33
8	50	0.38	0.30	0.32
9	36	0.39	0.36	0.25
10	46	0.26	0.54	0.19

Once all strategies had been categorized in this way it was possible to examine the distribution of strategies for each language. Table 5 shows the distribution of strategies subject by subject for the two English texts: five subjects reported more word-level than sentence-level or text-level strategies; four subjects reported more sentence-level than word-level or text-level strategies; and one subject reported more text-level than word-level or sentence-level strategies. Table 6 shows the distribution of strategies subject by subject and session by session for the two Spanish texts. For all subjects there is some variation in their deployment of strategies in the two sessions; this may be due to the presence of the researcher at the third session but also to the fact that by the third session subjects were becoming practised in the technique of self-reporting.

TABLE 5 Distribution of reading strategies subject by subject in the two English texts

Subject	No. of strategies	Word-level	Sentence-level	Text-level
1	25	0.28	0.48	0.24
2	30	0.30	0.43	0.27
3	20	0.45	0.25	0.30
4	26	0.46	0.23	0.31
5	28	0.43	0.18	0.39
6	22	0.64	0.18	0.18
7	9	0.55	0.33	0.11
8	25	0.32	0.28	0.40
9	17	0.23	0.47	0.29
10	17	0.18	0.65	0.18

TABLE 6 Distribution of reading strategies subject by subject and session by session in the two English texts

Subjects	Session II (No interviewer)				Session III (With interviewer)			
	No. of strategies	Word-level	Sentence level	Text-level	No. of strategies	Word-level	Sentence level	Text-level
1	15	0.33	0.53	0.13	10	0.20	0.40	0.40
2	18	0.22	0.39	0.39	12	0.42	0.50	0.08
3	10	0.30	0.20	0.50	10	0.60	0.30	0.10
4	19	0.53	0.10	0.37	7	0.28	0.57	0.14
5	16	0.44	0.06	0.50	12	0.42	0.33	0.25
6	12	0.92	----	0.08	10	0.30	0.40	0.30
7	3	1.00	----	----	6	0.33	0.50	0.17
8	13	0.08	0.23	0.69	12	0.58	0.33	0.08
9	6	----	0.67	0.33	11	0.36	0.36	0.27
10	6	0.17	0.50	0.33	11	0.18	0.72	0.09

Table 7 shows the distribution of strategies subject by subject for the two Spanish texts. Six subjects reported more word-level than sentence-level or text-level strategies; two subjects reported more sentence-level than word-level or text-level strategies; and two subjects reported more text-level than word-level or sentence-level strategies. Comparison with Table 5 shows that of the six subjects who reported more word-level than sentence-level or text-level strategies in respect of the Spanish texts only three (3, 4, 7) reported the same pattern in respect of the two English texts (the other three - 1, 8, 9 - reported more sentence-level than word-level or text-level strategies). The two subjects (2, 10) who reported more sentence-level than word-level or text-level strategies in respect of the Spanish texts reported the same pattern in respect of the English texts. The two subjects (5, 6) who reported more text-level than word-level or sentence-level strategies in respect of the Spanish texts reported a quite different pattern in respect of the English texts.

Table 8 shows the distribution of strategies subject by subject and session by session for the two Spanish texts. Five subjects (1, 3, 4, 6, 10) reported the same level of strategy with a higher frequency than the other two levels in both sessions.

TABLE 7 Distribution of reading strategies subject by subject in the two Spanish texts

Subject	No. of strategies	Word-level	Sentence-level	Text-level
1	32	0.56	0.22	0.22
2	20	0.10	0.60	0.30
3	19	0.63	0.21	0.16
4	26	0.81	0.08	0.11
5	25	0.20	0.32	0.48
6	9	0.33	0.11	0.55
7	18	0.50	0.05	0.44
8	25	0.44	0.32	0.24
9	19	0.53	0.26	0.21
10	29	0.31	0.48	0.21

TABLE 8 Distribution of reading strategies subject by subject and session by session in the two Spanish texts

Subjects	Session II (No interviewer)				Session III (With interviewer)			
	No. of strategies	Word-level	Sentence level	Text-level	No. of strategies	Word-level	Sentence level	Text-level
1	19	0.53	0.21	0.26	13	0.61	0.23	0.16
2	11	----	0.45	0.54	9	0.22	0.78	----
3	10	0.70	0.10	0.20	9	0.55	0.33	0.11
4	17	0.76	0.06	0.18	9	0.89	0.11	----
5	13	0.08	0.61	0.31	12	0.33	----	0.67
6	3	----	0.33	0.67	6	0.50	----	0.50
7	12	0.58	0.08	0.33	6	0.33	----	0.67
8	13	0.23	0.46	0.31	12	0.67	0.17	0.17
9	8	0.25	0.37	0.37	11	0.73	0.18	0.09
10	24	0.37	0.46	0.17	5	----	0.60	0.40

4 CONCLUSION

The foregoing analysis of the data elicited by our experiment is necessarily preliminary. However, the limited nature of the experiment and the number of variables involved suggest that the value of the data will lie less in any consistent patterns of alternation in reading strategies between L1 and L2 that it can be made to show than in what it reveals anecdotally of the conscious mental operations involved in reading.

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STIMULATING INTERACTION IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM THROUGH CONVERSATION IN SMALL GROUPS OF LEARNERS

I N T R O D U C T I O N

In recent studies of classroom interaction (see e.g. Seliger and Long (1983)) it has been emphasized that the illocutionary acts that teachers and students perform are part of their respective roles. Students are traditionally restricted to the illocutionary acts of repeating, practising. and informing, while it is the teachers who use the range of other functions that form communicative competence. This paper analyses one aspect of communicative competence (cf. Canale, 1983), namely discourse competence, in two different settings: traditional classroom interaction and group interaction in a classroom setting.

In traditional classroom interaction teachers have overwhelming communicative privileges. They are responsible for topic selection and development, and for effecting conversational closings. This means that it is the teacher who performs the necessary framing and focusing moves. It is also the teacher who structures the conversation and decides when a topic has been appropriately dealt with. Furthermore, the teacher's rights of address are exclusive. The students are not allowed to self-select, as turns are allocated by the teacher. In order to be allowed to speak a student has to wait until he has been nominated by the teacher. Consequently, he may not get a turn when he has something interesting to say, but can be called upon when he does not want to speak.

In the classroom the students are exposed to a discourse structure geared especially to meet the needs of the classroom. However, this discourse pattern is often highly unusual and deviant when compared to actual discourse as it takes place outside the classroom (Lørcher, forthcoming) and there is evidence that this classroom procedure is likely to influence students' ability to communicate outside the classroom. Kasper (1982) points to teaching-induced errors in students' speech and the findings of Holmen (1983) showed that when Danish learners of English (after 7 years of instruction) communicated with native speakers outside the classroom in an informal setting, they performed relatively few eliciting moves. They rarely performed follow-up moves, so their role in discourse was restricted mainly to producing responding moves. Holmen interprets her findings to be a product of the teaching procedure most often used in Danish high schools - frontal teaching with the teacher as a leader of a discussion with the focus on the analysis of a literary text.

In the following I attempt to compare traditional classroom interaction with the discourse that develops when students interact in smaller groups of 3 or 4 people. Will the students in a classroom setting be able to engage in a conversation similar to conversations in more informal settings? Will the students take over the functions otherwise mastered by the teacher, such as the direction of the discourse, corrective feedback, etc.? Will they be able to structure the conversation in order to obtain certain goals, or will the interaction be more or less diffuse?

THE EXPERIMENT

In order to compare traditional frontal classroom discourse (FCD) with the classroom discourse that develops when students interact in groups (GCD), a class of students who were reported by their teacher to engage frequently in group work was recorded in a session lasting 90 minutes. The class was divided into 4 groups of 3 or 4 students. Groups I and II were recorded on videotape, while Groups III and IV were auditaped. A lesson (50 minutes) conducted according to the traditional principles for frontal classroom teaching recorded on videotape serves as data for comparison.[1)]

Subjects: The students who took part in the frontal classroom lesson were Danish 6th form college students from the modern language line. They had had 6 or 7 years of instruction in English as a foreign language and were around 17 years of age. The students who participated in the group discussion were higher preparatory students who in comparison had had 7 or 8 years of instruction, but as less time is devoted to language studies per year at their school, the amount of time spent on the foreign language is roughly the same. The higher preparatory students attended an evening class and varied in age.

Teaching procedure: The frontal classroom session was conducted according to traditional principles with the teacher as the leader of the discussion. The object of teaching was Kurt Vonnegut's novel Slaughter House 5 and the students had been asked to prepare the topics to be discussed during the lesson for homework. In the group work session the students worked with "The American Dream". They had been asked to read a text at home, but the topics for discussion were handed out only at the beginning of the lesson. 4 groups worked independently and were given different questions to answer, so that together they covered the aspects the teacher wanted discussed.

Analysis: The GCD session involving the two groups who were videotaped were transcribed and these data were then compared to the FCD data. The two sessions were analysed with regard to student participation and structure of in-

teraction. As the two sessions differ in length, a qualitative rather than a quantitative analysis was attempted. The discourse model originally introduced by Sinclair & Coulthard (1975) and developed in a number of studies (e.g. Coulthard, 1977, Coulthard & Brazil, 1981) was used, though adapted and extended so that the data from the two different types of interaction could be handled by the same model. The model comprises the following units of discourse:

Interaction is the largest unit of discourse and is identical with the lesson as a whole. It can be divided into transactions which give the structure of the lesson.

Transactions coincide with topic boundaries and are typically marked by frame and focus, though a speaker may change direction without marking a new transaction boundary. A transaction may consist of several sequences dealing with the same topic or the same activity.

Sequences mark the semantic coherence of a succession of sequences. They may be linked by stylistic features such as syntactic and intonational parallellism, and/or identified by shared topic, which can be isolated formally by lexical paraphrases. A sequence consists of more than one "similar" exchange.

Exchanges are defined structurally as consisting of a basic move structure: I(nitiation), R(esponse), F(ollow-up). In frontal classroom discourse B(id) and N(omination) are also typical.

Moves are the minimum contribution by one speaker and comprise one or more acts.

Acts are the smallest units of discourse.

The division into transactions and sequences gives information about the structure of discourse. Sometimes it may be useful to divide a transaction into subtransactions dependent on the diversity of aspects/activities dealt with in one lesson. The pattern of exchanges functions at the interpersonal level of discourse, i.e. it tells us about the interaction between the individual participants, while moves are the participants' individual contribution to the discourse.

F I N D I N G S

THE STRUCTURE OF THE LESSON

Transactions

In both FCD and GCD the object of the interaction was an analysis of a given text. The transactional structure of

the two "lessons" points to similarities as well as differences. In both cases the teacher opens the lesson with an introduction outlining what is to take place during the session, which is followed by a transaction in which difficult words in the text are explained on the students' initiation. Thereafter follows in FCD a reading phase and another transaction dealing with the explanation of difficult words, this time teacher-initiated. Finally there is a frontal classroom discussion of the content of the text. The GCD lesson has no phase in which the students read aloud, nor has it a teacher-initiated phase of word explanations. Instead, a group discussion takes up a large part of the session. Within this group discussion there is a transaction in which the teacher joins the group. His participation in the group starts as a kind of teacher sounding: how far? what problems? any conclusions? etc. He then assists the group with linguistic problems, as well as problems in connection with an interpretation of the text. Thereafter he takes part in the conversation as a group member, and finally there is a correction and grammar instruction phase, in which the teacher corrects mistakes made by the students and gives the relevant rules for any grammatical problems.

Both sessions end with a transaction dealing with homework, and it is interesting to notice that this part, as well as the introduction, is performed in Danish by both teachers. A code shift from Danish to English signals the start of the actual lesson. Typically, the mother tongue is used for small talk and more practical functions.

The discussion of the content of the text is similar in the two sessions, in so far as the macrostructure is concerned. Both interactions can be divided into transactions, subtransactions, and sequences. The difference lies in the way the two lessons are organized and in the amount of student participation.

Topic selection and development

Transaction as a unit is identified by the focussing activity that occurs at its boundaries. As the FCD lesson unfolds, the teacher typically signposts at intervals its prior or subsequent direction. The subtransaction "Pilgrim vs. Vonnegut" is opened as follows:

Ext. 1. I also asked you yesterday when you were told to read this - er these pages that you were to compare - er Billy Pilgrim - with Kurt Vonnegut.

All topics and subtopics were selected by the teacher and introduced into the conversation by her. This means that the students had no influence on the structuring of the discourse into the relevant transactions, subtransactions, and sequences.

In GCD the students were given a list of points to discuss, so topic proposals and their subsequent acceptance, rejection or selection are not the students' responsibility. However, even though topics for discussion are given in advance, it is the students who introduce these aspects into the conversation. Consequently, it is their responsibility to structure the discourse, they must signal boundaries and they are responsible for topic development. Furthermore, in order to deal with the suggested topics, the students formulated subtopics, and thus performed a function very similar to topic selection. As an example, it can be mentioned that in order to deal with the topic "Dennis' childhood", the students formulated the following subtopics: family, housing, jobs, "absurd", intellect, in addition to the subtopic listed by the teacher: own comments. The subtopic "absurd" stands out in that it involves a problem which has to be solved before the group can procede with the proposed topic. One student formulates the problem and the members of the group co-operate in order to solve this problem:

Ext. 2. 1: ... but er I don't mean er I don't know what he means about growing up tough and absurd. Absurd .. he was growing up tough and absurd, what does he mean (about) that?

Structurally, the sequence which develops in response to this question is held together by syntactic and lexical parallelism "I think he means..." involving several explanations to the problem in question: "I think he means that no-one took too much care of him, he is grown up on his own hands, he could do what he wanted to do", "it was without anybody interfering", "his parents wasn't standing at him the whole time", "I think, also because he was the oldest... I was somewhat more independent than the other kids of my age", "and I think in his own way he is grown up".

Closing a topic

Conversational closings were all effected by the teacher in FCD. Just as the students were supposed to accept the establishment and elaboration of a topic within the course of the lesson, they were expected to accept closings as well. In GCD the students had to decide when they wanted to close the discussion of a particular item and closings were often negotiated and brought about co-operatively. In Extract 3 below, student 2 makes uses of a pre-closing to inform the other participants that she thinks that the topic in question has been adequately covered. It is then up to the hearers to close the discussion by initiating a terminal exchange or to signal that they do not want to close the discussion yet. Consider the following example:

Ext. 3. 2: I think it is er enough
[1: yes about the setting but er do we hear
2: yes
3: I think it is important also
to mention his er work - just to see that he's the
mayor of Cleveland
2: yes
1: I don't think it has something to do with er that
question
2: no
[1: setting is where and when
2: is is only where and when
...

In GCD the students had a chance to learn and practise how conversational closings are initiated and they challenged each other to react to suggestions for closing a conversation, either accepting a closing or initiating further development of a topic, for example by bringing in further points which had not yet been mentioned.

INTERPERSONAL INTERACTION

Exchanges

As we have seen, the students in FCD had no influence on the discourse as far as the structuring of transactions, subtransaction, and sequences was concerned. They only take part at the exchange level, but even at this level their participation is restricted. A quantitative analysis of the discourse, excluding the word-explanation and reading-aloud transactions, showed that 82% of the discourse was performed by the teacher. Student participation amounted to no more than 18% and apart from one I-move in English "Will you, please, repeat what you have been writing", and a number of questions and comments in Danish, the students performed only R-moves. I- and F-moves were performed by the teacher and the following extract is representative for the FCD discussion as a whole:

Ext. 4. T: that's right er - how does this sound - if you were if somebody come up to you and said it's terrible a dear friend I have has just died and you said well so it goes - what would that friend of yours - think about you
S: crazy
T: yes
S: he would think that I'm wanna be crazy
T: crazy or
S: -s-cynical
T: cynical yes - and - Jens
S: maybe er he would think - that he is evil
T: evil
S: yes
T: unfeeling anyway - certainly - er do you think that -

Vonnegut who also uses the phrade phrase really is unfeeling about - death that he doesn't feel anything that he is cynical about death - 2 - Tomas

S: mm I think if he wasn't er if he was he wouldn't have written the book

T: that's right - so what does this phrase become what is it - yes

S: it's wrong

T: it's ironical - and - if it is something you say if you don't like to think of a person - who has died or rather to think that a person is dead - and instead you just say well I'll think about him when he was alive - what do you do - 3 - what is it you do - you don't want to think of this because it's unpleasant so you think about something else what d'you call that

S: - 5 - to run away

T: yes - or to use a foreign word

S: escaping

T: escape so we - can talk about - 2 - if you add an ism then we have - 5 - escapism

S: -pism

Student participation only varies at the level of R-moves from full elaborative responses to elliptical sentences, single-word utterances and even syllables. The discussion is strictly structured by the teacher, who leads her class towards her own preformulated interpretation of the novel. As her questions are always closed, often allowing only for very specific answers or limited even to requests for specific words, the conversation sometimes resembles a blank-filling test.

In FCD the teacher is dominant in so far as she is supposed to possess the desired answer. In most contexts it is unthinkable that the students would perform F-moves evaluating the teacher's utterances. However, in GCD solutions were reached on a co-operative basis; points were negotiated until agreeements were reached. The fact that students felt free to agree or disagree with each other often created an actual interchange of ideas and points of view, which were often substantiated in order to be accepted by the group. Consider the following example:

Ext. 5.

2: you can see er he er says I spent all my time as a youngster coming to understand the experience of the ghetto ik'

3: yes but is that is that enough to say why Dennis go into politics er old older people experience the ghetto they live their lives there

2: do you think so

3: and I I don't believe that's enough to go into politics

1: no but I er but er er I think it has something to do

[with the way he is go into politics - he he wants
2: [yes
er people to be er equal I think
[2: yes
3: [yes I agree
2: yes
3: yes but er I don't see that again that it was because of his childhood - it came later when er ...

Student follow-up often occurred in the form of explanations, enlargements, and substantiations, but it rarely had the form "that's right", etc. so typically found in teacher follow-ups. If such F-moves occurred, it was in a modulated form (e.g. I think) and often in connection with a negotiation among participants:

Ext. 6. 3: I have very little I have er point seven define ethnic pride - I think pride is - he is proud to come from er er er he is proud to be foreigner and negro he is proud to be born a catholic and er he's proud to be born a Dane and that's again race and religion and country and origin that's what I would think
2: yes I think er that er Allan is right
1: yes true
2: do you agree
1: I accept

While the FCD data divide up easily into three-part structures, this was not the case with regard to the GCD, in which case a number of utterances were often tied together. One I-move might occasion a series of R-moves, as was the case when the question "What does it mean to grow up tough and absurd?" was formulated (see p181), or an utterance might function as an answer to a preceding move and at the same time elicit the following move (cf. the utterance "Do you think so?" in Ext. 5 above). Similarly, one F-move may be followed by another, either in an exchange between two persons, or as a chain of follow-ups from several participants. R/I moves and F-moves can, in principle, occur an unlimited number of times and a model allowing for recursive elements is necessary. The following extension of the original I - R - F model: [I - R/I^n - R - F^n] can account for the GCD data as well and is in accordance with the model presented by Stubbs (1981:110) for ordinary spoken discourse.

Thus the two types of data differ at the level of the interpersonal exchange of moves. In GCD the interaction is not restricted to a rigid I - R - F structure with the teacher performing most I- and all F-moves. The students do not have to wait for teacher follow-up and the interaction is characterized by a flexibility and complexity made possible within an exchange pattern in which elements are recursive.

Another factor that might explain the passivity of students in FCD, as compared to the more dynamic interaction in GCD, is the peculiar nature of much traditional classroom questioning. The teacher is not seeking information in the accepted sense, since he already knows the answer - hence the many F-moves in which the teacher evaluates the students' answers. In GCD the students struggle towards possible solutions. Negotiation is meaningful in that the answers are unknown to the participants. Furthermore, when the teacher participated in the group discussion, he asked "real questions" and instances also occurred in which he received follow-up from his students.

Dominance, submission, and competition

In FCD the teacher plays a dominant role. As we have seen she is in charge of the lesson and has explicit ascendancy in terms of her social status. Furthermore, she has implicit ascendancy in that she is the expert who possesses the knowledge students must desire to pass their examinations. In GCD the students in the small groups are equal in terms of their participant roles, they all occupy the social role of a student. Ascendancy is non-existent, at least in theory, and this is the principle according to which group discussions are supposed to function. However, in reality, things may turn out to be different. Differences in personality, linguistic competence, world knowledge, willingness to co-operate, desire to compete, etc. may greatly influence the structure of the conversation.

In GCD it is obvious that the students in group I do not contribute equally. Extract 7 below is representative in that students 1 and 4 are dominant both as far as quantity and direction of the interaction are concerned, and they often compete for turns. Students 2 and 3 influence the direction of the conversation now and again, but they are often submissive, supplying minimal responses or expressing delight in the interaction. In FCD as well as GCD, it is a teacher's aim that as many students as possible take part in the interaction. This point of view is voiced by the FCD teacher as follows: "Let's hear someone we haven't heard yet", and when the teacher takes part in the GFC discussion in Group I, he feels obliged to state explicitly that "the idea of group work is that everybody takes part". This has an effect on the interaction at least for at time, so that student 1, in particular, pauses for students 2 and 3 to state their opinions. However, when the conversation is considered as a whole, students 1 and 4 are clearly dominant, student 1 on account of her linguistic superiority, student 4 because of his superior world knowledge and his eagerness to convey his engagement in problems of immediate actuality and relevance to the rest of the group. The following extract illustrates this aspect:

Ext. 7.

...

4: but in connection with when he went from door to door - some of the Danish er- er hvad hedder der - politikere

1: politicians

4: politicians - er - they do er - take er er the Conservative Party er got er - a member from Denver and er - got him here to Denmark to show - er er the Conservative member in Aarhus - how he he tried to do - under under a election in Britain and he went with him from door to door - to try to er get some votes

1: yes but don't you think it is - especially er the small parties er with with only less mon er little money

[4: well I think that er
[1: not the Conservatives but

1: I think that way of er campaign - are coming from er

[from
[1: America

4: from Britain

1: Britain - maybe

4: or from the immigrants there

1: yea maybe

4: or from the immigrants in America - because er in that time they haven't er - got much money and the only way they could er - get some votes - was - to go from door to door

2: yes

1: but here in Denmark at the last edition I think that it was - mostly - the small parties those with little money

4: but I don't think the Conservative Party

[1: no no
[4: hasn't any money but I think - it was a new thing - er it would be very popular that er - a member - er - came around and er to to people - that sound that's

[er perhaps er - some kind of er -
[3: I don't think so - I wouldn't like them

1: neither would I

...

2: what poli politis er

1: politician politician

2: politician er er brought a flower with him and er gave it to er

3: old people

2: to the people yes

In Group II the participants co-operated to solve problems, sometimes agreeing, sometimes disagreeing. They all performed I-, R-, and F-moves, and judged on a basis of intuition the interaction appeared symmetrical.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It has been illustrated that the structure of the two kinds of classroom discourse was similar at the level of transactions and sequences. The students in GCD managed to build up a coherent structure around the suggested topics for discussion. At the same time they mastered the functions involved in structuring and developing discourse, an aspect which the teacher entirely controls in FCD. At the level of exchanges the two types of discourse differed with regard to what parts were carried out by the students themselves (almost exclusively R-moves in FCD as compared to I - R - F moves in GCD). In addition, the patterns of exchange were different in that the three-part structure of which FCD was typically built up was exchanged by a more complex and flexible pattern with R/I and F-moves as recursive elements in the discourse mode. In this connection it must also be mentioned that an initiation would sometimes hang in the air without response, thus yielding an incomplete exchange. In FCD this never occurred. The teacher would not tolerate initiations hanging in the air without a response. Instead, she would rephrase or enlarge her original initiation until a response was obtained. The data also offer examples in which the teacher finally had to perform the desired R-move herself. In such cases all the moves in an exchange were taken over by the teacher with the students left overwhelmingly passive. Many instances of nonfluency, false starts, interrupted sentences, reformulations, etc., in the students' speech in GCD were noticeable. In FCD these phenomena were less frequent, partly because utterances were much shorter, partly because the students had some time to formulate their answers before being nominated to speak.

Another difference lies in the ease with which the students could obtain corrective feedback. In FCD the teacher could correct the students whenever this was necessary. However, teacher-corrections may turn out to be a face-threatening activity, as in the following example:

Ext. 8. You have to speak up Frank - you know that -
we've talked about that before -
er er he he didn't give the right answer anyway so
doesn't matter very much (laughter from students)
- what - what is the right answer?

The student's motivation and attitude to a subject may also be influenced by his awareness that he is constantly being evaluated by both his teacher and his fellow students. In GCD teacher-corrections were limited to a special correction phase and consequently correction did not impede communication. Nor was the student being corrected exposed to the entire class. The drawback of this method is the risk of mistakes passing unnoticed, and possibly being reinforced in subsequent utterances. There is, however, ample evidence in the

data that students are able to correct each other. Other-repairs occurred frequently and students filled in gaps in each other's vocabulary. They co-operated so that interaction became possible in spite of linguistic deficiencies.

A marked increase in student participation and motivation was clearly manifest in GCD as compared to FCD. Of course, this factor is not in itself evidence of a subsequent increase in language learning. However, the importance of interaction as a very beneficial, if not a necessary factor, in language acquisition, has been emphasized in a number of studies (e.g. Krashen 1981, Wells 1981, Allwright, this volume) and is the hypothesis on which this study is based.

Notes

1) The FCD data were collected by G. Kasper, and I am grateful to her for letting me have access to them.

Notes on the transcription

[indicates that two or more utterances occur simultaneously.
- 5 - indicates a pause of 5 seconds.

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STOP THE MONITOR I WANT TO GET OFF: OR LOOKING FOR A WAY FORWARD IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

In general, research on L2 development seeks to address the questions of how people learn 2nd and subsequent languages, and often, how similar this process is to the acquisition of a first language. As yet, we are not in a position to state exactly how it is that children do acquire their first language, although it seems to be clear that this is a creative process, governed by universal principles. The grammar constructed by the child is, in principle, capable of generating an infinite number of well formed sentences in that language, only a small subset of which she will actually have heard. Second language speakers, although they may not have achieved native like competence, are also able to produce and understand novel sentences in accordance with the rules of the target language or of the inter-language which corresponds to their current competence. This creative ability suggests certain similarities between the processes of L1 and L2 development. However, theories of L2 development have to account for the fact that, while all normal children acquire a first language to a similar level of competence in the first five or six years of life, older L2 learners frequently fail to achieve a level of proficiency equal to that of the native speaker. Various explanations of this phenomenon have been proposed, relating it either to socio-affective factors or to the neurological factors which accompany maturation.

We propose to discuss one recent theory of second language development, Krashen's Monitor Model (1977) which has had considerable influence. Firstly, we want to look at the distinction that Krashen makes between language acquisition and learning, and his account of the input of the language acquisition device; secondly, the part played by the socio-affective filter; and thirdly, to review some of the neurolinguistic literature relevant to L2 development in the light of which, Krashen's claim that L2 acquisition in adults is similar to L1 acquisition in children, should be evaluated. Although the data remains, in many respects, inconclusive we will attempt to show that Krashen's failure to take account of the child/adult difference is an over simplification and constitutes a weakness of the Monitor Model. The terms acquisition and learning are used in a particular technical sense in the Monitor Theory and in discussing it we will follow Krashen's use of these terms but to avoid confusion we will also use the term development to refer to the 'gaining of knowledge of an L2' in its widest possible sense.

The aim of much recent research on L2 learning and use has been to cast light on several widely known phenomena which are typical of a large number of adult L2 learners. Krashen listed these phenomena as:

> "discrepancies in L2 oral and written performance, differences between student's careful classroom speech and casual conversation and the observation that certain students display a firm grasp of the structures of the target language yet seem unable to function in the language, while others do poorly on structure test and yet seem able to communicate quite well" (Krashen 1977:152).

Krashen proposes the Monitor Model for adult L2 performance to account for these data. The Model accommodates findings of earlier work on the Natural Order of Acquisition of certain English grammatical morphemes and the effects of psycho-social or affective factors on L2 learning, and presents them in an intuitively appealing but rather controversial theoretical context.

The Monitor Model rests on a crucial distinction between subconscious acquisition and conscious learning, first suggested by Corder (1967) and later elaborated by Lawler and Selinker (1971). Krashen defines these terms as follows:

> "the technical term acquisition is used here to refer to the way language abilities are internalized naturally, that is without conscious focussing on linguistic forms. It appears to require, minimally, participation in natural communication situations and is the way children gain knowledge of first and second languages... Language acquisition is a subconscious process, language learning on the other hand is a conscious process and is either the result of a formal language learning situation or a self study programme" (Krashen 1977:152-3).

Acquisition then, in Krashen's sense may take place at any age, given appropriate conditions while learning depends on the isolation of linguistic rules and feedback or error correction (Krashen and Seliger 1975) and, as hypothesized, becomes possible, only with the onset of the formal operations stage identified by Piaget (Krashen 1975a).

Other aspects of the Monitor theory, the filter, input, will be considered later but here we want to discuss some of the implications of the acquisition learning distinction and the Monitor itself.

At first sight the acquisition/learning distinction appears to provide clear and useful principles to account for the data described. However, the terms acquisition and learning as defined by Krashen are not really explanatory and the meaning of learning shifts in Krashen's writing to the point where it is so narrowly defined as to have only a minimal application, while acquisition remains a vague concept under which far too much data is subsumed.

First, we would like to trace the development of the concept of learning. Krashen and Seliger (1975) have suggested that the essential characteristics of formal instruction are: "the isolation of words and rules of the target language and the possibility of error detection and correction" (Krashen and Seliger 1975:181). They claim that these features contribute directly to L2 proficiency in adults

and, furthermore, that successful L2 adult performers provide themselves with these features, even in informal environments by means of grammars and dictionaries and by obtaining feedback on their performance from native speakers. This view is modified later on by Krashen (1976) when he postulates the Monitor Model, claiming that the ingredients of formal instruction are necessary for the development of the Monitor, while intake-rich informal environments allow acquisition to take place. Learning then is defined as the product of rule isolation and error correction. It is conscious, systematic linguistic knowledge and is a necessary condition for Monitor use. Krashen then further states that learning is only available as a Monitor (Krashen 1976:163). This step in the argument is not fully substantiated. It is one thing to argue that learning, along with time and focus on form, is a necessary condition for Monitor use but it does not follow that learning can only be used as a Monitor. Krashen's reasoning seems to proceed along these lines; firstly, that formal instruction produces learning, secondly that learning edits output via the Monitor, thirdly output is initiated by the acquired system, fourthly the acquired system operates independently of formal instruction and fifthly if anything learned appears in the output it must be the result of editing. However, there is no way in which we can determine whether the contents of the acquired system are free from the effects of formal instruction, and hence whether or not learning, the product of formal instruction, is in fact only available as a Monitor. This remains a hypothesis.

The concept of learning is further modified in the distinction made between two categories of learnable rules (Krashen 1981a:114-5); rules of thumb, available for monitor users to edit performance, that is, the easy rules, and rules of structure, which Krashen thinks would only be relevant for language appreciation and for those who have a genuine interest in the linguistics of the target language. He definitely does not envisage such rules being used in language production. Learning then, has a very restricted domain in Krashen's model. It is only available as a Monitor and it involves only simple rules. The Monitor Model places every aspect of L2 performance except the formulation of these simple grammatical rules under the heading of acquisition. The distinction between acquisition and learning therefore appears to explain very little, since learning can account only for the use in specific conditions of a number of low level rules which the L2 speakers has not (by definition) internalised properly, or acquired. Learning in this sense is merely the possession of information which cannot be applied freely. Acquisition thus becomes an umbrella term covering all knowledge of the target language which the L2 speaker is able to use appropriately under any conditions.

According to Krashen's (1977) earlier statements acquisition in adults is <u>similar</u> to acquisition in children. More recently however (1982) he has stated that in adults acquisition is "a process similar if not identical to the way children develop ability in their first language" (Krashen 1982:10). Nowhere in his writings on the Monitor Theory does Krashen attempt to clarify these statements and one can only assume that he regards the differences between child and adult acquisition as minimal. However, while the product of L1

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acquisition is native speaker competence and that of natural or informal child L2 acquisition is often indistinguishable from native proficiency, the product of adult L2 acquisition is nearly always characterised by a foreign accent and, frequently, by grammatical errors. When these errors are repaired in writing or in careful speech Krashen claims that the adult's learned system is effecting repair via the Monitor; this does not explain why repair should be necessary in the first place. Some, clearly, deal with performance errors of the kind that native speakers make, false starts, changes of direction in mid-sentence, inappropriate selection of lexical items etc., and these are due to the general limitations on performance that all speakers share to a greater or lesser degree. But many L2 errors are obviously not of this type. In the case of beginners or intermediate students we might assume that errors reveal lack of knowledge of the target language system or the nature of the learner's interlanguage. In the case of the very advanced L2 speakers, such as "P" a Chinese speaker, cited by Krashen (1977), who can not only correct their errors, but also formulate the relevant rules after years of exposure to the target language, some other explanation of the apparent failure of the acquisition system is needed. Krashen simply states that some items are acquired late. He does not explain why this should be the case, beyond implying that these items might be redundant in communication since they are often absent in Monitor free conditions where the L2 performer focusses on meaning rather than form. Neither does he explain why these errors should only occur intermittently in L2 performance.

In short, if the product of adult L2 acquisition is typically different from the product of child acquisition, we must ask how this can be accounted for. There are two possible approaches to this problem. First, one could argue that the acquisition process in adults and children is the same, but that input to the system is different - this appears to be Krashen's position stated, in terms of an affective filter which blocks some of the input and thus limits the data available for processing. The other possibility is that the process itself is different in adults, due either to the end of a critical period for language acquisition or to other changes in the cognitive structures involved. This second possibility will be discussed later. But I think we must stress that the two approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Krashen's definition of, and distinction between, acquisition and learning is, thus, crucial to his theory of L2 development, but appears to be based on inadequately substantiated notions of what is subconscious and what is conscious. McLaughlin (1980:335) quite rightly points out that the requirement of falsifiability is not met as these terms are not tied to observable experimental conditions. This part of the discussion, then, concerns the problem of the status of a hypothesis. The acquisition/learning hypothesis has not been proved by experimental evidence but neither has it been disproved. McLaughlin's point (1980:335) is that as there seems to be no way of determining its validity, it has no use as a working model and would be better replaced by an alternative that is more amenable to observation. Krashen argues that the hypothesis permits the discussion of a phenomena in a useful way, i.e. within the concept of the Monitor

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Model and successfully predicts data (Krashen 1979:159). This seems quite unexceptionable. Krashen does not however offer any criteria on which he would decide between two hypotheses which both successfully predicted the same data. It is here that McLaughlin's requirement of falsifiability seems relevant for, ultimately, the scientist would want to choose between alternative hypotheses on those grounds. The problem with the acquisition/learning distinction in its present form is that it is too vague to be susceptible to this kind of test. As we have pointed out the term learning has such limited reference that acquisition becomes an imprecise concept of little explanatory power. Neither term is defined except by relating it to conscious and subconscious processes and as these processes cannot be directly observed, Krashen's use of the acquisition/learning distinction appears to be largely impressionistic.

Another interpretation of acquisition vs learning is provided by Ellis (1982) based on a distinction drawn earlier by Ochs (1979). It is that of planned and unplanned discourse which provide two extreme points of a continuum, with most discourse falling somewhere in between. Ochs suggests that linguistic knowledge acquired at different stages of development will be used in different types of discourse (Ochs 1979:55). The parallel between this hypothesis and Krashen's Monitor Model is evident. Krashen has repeatedly insisted that his term acquisition denotes linguistic knowledge developed subconsciously and naturally by children and adults, while learning is a product of formal study. But Ochs (1979:53-4) speaking of L1 use does not suggest, as Krashen does, that speakers have two distinct stores of linguistic knowledge. Rather, her hypothesis is that different types of discourse make use of different linguistic strategies which have developed according to the demands of different situations. Ellis applies Ochs's suggestion to L2 performance and says that:

> "the distinction between planned and unplanned discourse subsumes and is therefore more powerful than Krashen's 1977 distinction between acquisition and learning. These are not so much two independent systems for developing ability in an L2 as claimed by Krashen (1981a:1) as two types of language use corresponding to the formal/informal distinction..." (Ellis 1982:300).

He points out that it is not surprising that learners who have studied formally, but who have little experience of natural communication situations, often fail to transfer their L2 knowledge to unplanned discourse "because the latter requires different procedures of use and these have not been practised" (Ellis 1982:301). This does not imply, as Krashen claims, that learning cannnot be transferred to the acquired system or internalised by a Language Acquisition Device. If the learner is able to practice speaking informally, i.e. in an unplanned discourse situation, she will develop the access skills to the target language knowledge which is appropriate for unplanned discourse. Thus Ellis's interpretation overcomes the difficulties inherent in Krashen's formulation, that is, that acquisition and learning are two different processes which produce separate stores of target knowledge, and that learned target language knowledge is only available as a monitor and cannot be transferred to the acquired system.

It appears to us that there is no way in which Krashen's claims can be substantiated and that the phenomena he seeks to account for are far more satisfactorily explained in Ellis's terms.

Krashen (1982) attempts to account for any discrepancy between child and adult success in L2 development by adopting Dulay and Burt's (1977) concept of an affective filter. This addition to the Monitor Theory is a great improvement, since it allows for the learner's attitudes and feelings toward the L2 and its speakers, the teaching etc., to modify L2 development. However Krashen's (1982) presentation of the Filter as a crude blocking mechanism which prevents input from reaching the LAD seems to us to be a gross over-simplification of what is surely an extremely complex system. Furthermore, Krashen also apparently equates the Filter and the LAD with anatomical structures, an assumption which is not suggested in the neurolinguistic literature and which was surely not intended by those researchers who first proposed a LAD as an abstract theoretical construct. This representation of the Affective Filter as a block also tends to undermine Krashen's insistence that it is outside the LAD, for which no evidence is given. He seems to envisage the Filter as a sort of drawbridge over which linguistic data, if it is lucky, may pass into the embattled keep of the LAD. However, people's attitudes towards an L2 may vary according to their experience of teachers, methods, encounters with native speakers, culture etc. The same person may have quite different attitudes at different times, and even strongly negative attitudes towards the L2 culture and its speakers may be balanced by a determination to succeed in learning the language. If the Filter handles these delicate shades of feeling, it might better be represented as an associative prism through which language input is refracted, rather than a neurological block.

We will not have time to review the vast corpus of data from neurolinguistics which has bearing on L2 development, but we would wish to put forward what we feel is perhaps one of the most pertinent set of observations made recently in that field.

A great deal of neurolinguistic research has attempted to explain the apparent inability of adolescents and adults to learn L2s as successfully as children, but some evidence exists to suggest that, in certain respects, older learners may have advantages over children. The speed with which older learners can often catch up with younger ones and their greater facility in assimilating grammatical concepts can be partly explained using neurological data. Significant neurological developments demonstrate that cerebral maturation makes possible the utilisation of new strategies in L2 learning which are not available to children when acquiring L1s or L2s. Walsh and Diller (1978) pointed out that the local circuit neurons, or star shaped cells of the cerebral cortex develop and mature much later than the pyramidal cells. They argued that the different maturation timetables of different kinds of cell give rise to "developmental stages, not critical stages", in the language acquisition process. They relate the early fixing of pyramidal cells to the difficulties of older children and adults in transferring language functions to the right hemisphere after damage to the left, and acquiring native like accents in foreign languages. However, they maintain that plasticity of the

brain is dependent on the local circuit neurons which continue to establish new connections well into adulthood and form the neurological substrata of the cognitive developments which take place in adolescence and adulthood. They exemplify what is meant by developmental stages with regard to Wernicke's area; initially linked to Broca's Area and the sensory motor regions of the tongue and larynx, Wernicke's area later develops associations with the visual cortex, and other associations which allow the development of fine motor control of facial muscles and wrist, paralleled by emerging cognitive skills (Walsh and Diller 1978a). All these developments contribute to language expression. They comment:

> "It is just this range of developed language systems in the mature cortex which are now relatively sophisticated in their specialized synaptic arrangements and intra and inter cortical connections, which are available in the acquisition of a second language. In these latest stages of language maturation, further well established sensory/intergrative mechanisms are now accessible" (Walsh and Diller 1978a:8).

Language development is also discussed in terms of higher and lower order language processes. The lower order processes include speech analysis in Wernicke's Area, expressive speech and the patterning of encoded information in Broca's Area and visual perception related to reading and writing. These functions develop early. In contrast they say:

> "The higher order functioning develops later and appears more adaptive to complex linguistic demand and includes semantic processing in word object-relationships. This less specialised higher order linguistic functioning seems to utilise inter- and intra-hemispheric information and the essential nature of this cortical integration process is linguistic" (Walsh and Diller 1978:16).

So the development of higher order functions depends on the continuing plasticity of the local circuit neurons and may explain why older learners can progress more rapidly in some areas of language, especially in L2 grammar and vocabulary.

Arguments have been put forward on the basis of this evidence (Diller 1981) that the primary reasons for failure to learn an L2 adequately after childhood are social and psychological. But however influential such factors are, it is important to recognise that the data presented by Walsh and Diller points to a qualitative difference in the neurological basis of child and adult language learning. While the cerebral developments documented are claimed to assist the learning process in adults, such developments also mark this process as distinct from child language acquisition. Foreign accents are often claimed to be the only insuperable obstacle encountered by adult learners, but the most competent adult foreign language speakers will often admit to a degree of uncertainty in using their L2 and to increased difficulty in moments of stress. It may be the case, that the experience of acquiring a language before the establishment of all the pyramidal axon connections, confers not only native

pronunciation but also a native security in using the language and native intuitions of correctness and acceptability. The plasticity dependent on the late fixing of the local circuit neurons, contributes to the acquisition of more complex L1 knowledge as well as L2 knowledge. It is possible that the kind of L2 knowledge acquirable beyond childhood is comparable to the later stages of L1 development, but lacks the basis provided in the early years of childhood. This hypothesis would seem to be borne out by the observation of Ochs (1979) that communicative strategies acquired in the first three to four years of life are not replaced by more complex strategies but retained alongside them throughout life and used in unplanned discourse when conceptual and situational demands on the speaker are heavy. These early strategies clearly must be acquired before the fixing of the pyramidal cells and their connections. It is precisely in unplanned discourse situations where the demands on the speaker's attentions are heavier than usual, that L2 speakers typically perform less than optimally. In an L2 they lack the earlier acquired strategies available to L1 speakers.

Our aim in this paper has been to discuss some recent work on L2 development and to approach the question of similarities and differences between child and adult and first and second language learning. We have discussed Krashen's Monitor Theory in some detail because it appears on the surface to provide valuable insights into the processes of second language development and performance, but on closer consideration this theory appears to be unsatisfactory in several ways. We suggested that Ellis's proposal (1982) that L2 performance draws on different strategies for planned and unplanned discourse avoids the difficulties inherent in Krashen's formulation. The Monitor theory assumes a similarity between child and adult acquisition and explains differences in product in terms of an affective filter. Socio-affective factors have been found to be extremely influential in determining L2 development and the prominent place Krashen gives the filter in his model is based on extensive data. However, Krashen's presentation of the filter is in many ways an over-simplification. Inspite of Krashen's own earlier work in the field of Neurolinguistics, the Monitor Theory disregards the possibility that the maturation of the brain might directly influence L2 development and so we have briefly looked at some of the relevant literature which we think probably redresses the balance and helps consider the Monitor Theory from a wider perspective. While it appears that the effects of puberty on L2 development cannot be stated simply in terms of the completion of lateralization there is evidence to suggest that neurological changes cannot be ignored by any theory of adult language learning. The evidence of Walsh and Diller (1978, 1978a) on the late maturation of circuit neurons might well provide additional support for a modified version of Seliger's (1978) hypothesis of Multiple Critical Periods, extending throughout life.

Our own tentative suggestions would be as follows: neurological and cognitive developments combine with affective factors, dependent on life experiences to render the learning of an L2 after puberty qualitively different from L1 acquisition. This does not imply that adult L2 learning cannot be highly successful, indeed there are examples of L2 performers who have achieved a native like proficiency. However, the existence of such outstanding people does not

lessen the probability that the majority of L2 learners will retain a foreign accent and occasional difficulties and frustrations in self expression in their L2. The exceptions prove the rule. Because of the effects of maturity some of the processes of L2 development will be different from those of L1 acquisition and the particular skills and abilities of older learners will take over from those characteristic of the child. This need not imply the loss of ability to learn a language or the degeneration of the LAD but rather that the ability to learn and the functioning of the LAD are modified by maturation, just as thought processes and physical abilities are modified. We tend to think in terms of lack of achievement in L2 learners because we compare their output to that of a native speaker. However, this may well be a false comparison, since languages learned later in life cannot, by definition, serve the purpose of mediating the earliest experiences and cognitive developments of childhood. If this is one of the primary functions of language, it is unrealistic to expect a later learned language to be psychologically equivalent to a language learned in childhood since it has not served the same initial purpose.

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